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THE ACTS
OF
THE APOSTLES

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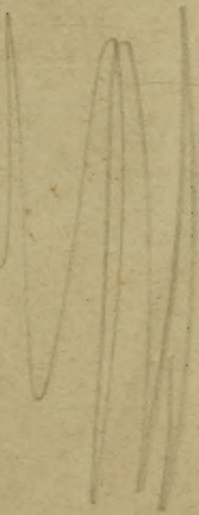

H. Courtier, F.R.G.S.

THE ACTS

OF

THE APOSTLES

WITH MAPS, INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

EDITED BY

J. RAWSON LUMBY, D.D.

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PREFACE
BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE General Editor of *The Cambridge Bible for Schools* thinks it right to say that he does not hold himself responsible either for the interpretation of particular passages which the Editors of the several Books have adopted, or for any opinion on points of doctrine that they may have expressed. In the New Testament more especially questions arise of the deepest theological import, on which the ablest and most conscientious interpreters have differed and always will differ. His aim has been in all such cases to leave each Contributor to the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, only taking care that mere controversy should as far as possible be avoided. He has contented himself chiefly with a careful revision of the notes, with pointing out omissions, with

suggesting occasionally a reconsideration of some question, or a fuller treatment of difficult passages, and the like.

Beyond this he has not attempted to interfere, feeling it better that each Commentary should have its own individual character, and being convinced that freshness and variety of treatment are more than a compensation for any lack of uniformity in the Series.

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*** The Text adopted in this Edition is that of Dr Scrivener's *Cambridge Paragraph Bible*. A few variations from the ordinary Text, chiefly in the spelling of certain words, and in the use of italics, will be noticed. For the principles adopted by Dr Scrivener as regards the printing of the Text see his Introduction to the *Paragraph Bible*, published by the Cambridge University Press.

INTRODUCTION.

I. DESIGN OF THE AUTHOR.

THE writer of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth, in his introductory sentences, that the book is meant to be a continuation of a "former treatise." It is addressed to a certain "Theophilus," and since, among the other books of the New Testament, the third Gospel is written to a person of the same name, it is natural to take these compositions to be the work of the same author, and the unvarying tradition of antiquity has ascribed both works to St Luke. Leaving however, for the present, the consideration of this tradition, and turning to the contents of the book, we find that the author describes his earlier work as a "treatise of all that Jesus *began* both to do and teach until the day in which He was taken up" (Acts i. 1, 2). This description accords exactly with the character and contents of St Luke's Gospel, and, moreover, the opening sentences of the Acts are an expansion and explanation of the closing sentences of that Gospel. They define more completely the "promise of the Father" there mentioned, they tell us how long the risen Jesus remained with His disciples, they describe the character of His communications during the forty days, and they make clear to us, what otherwise would have been difficult to understand, viz. how it came to pass that the disciples, when their Master had been taken from them, "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke xxiv. 52). When we read in the Acts of the two men in white apparel who testified to the desolate gazers that the departed Jesus was to come again as He had been seen to go into heaven, we can comprehend that they would recall His words (John xiv. 28),

"I go away and come again unto you. If ye loved me ye would *rejoice* because I said, I go unto the Father," and that they would be strengthened to act upon them.

Thus, from the way in which this second account of the Ascension supplements and explains the former brief notice in the Gospel, it seems natural to accept the Acts as a narrative written with the purpose of continuing the history of the Christian Church after Christ's ascension, in the same manner in which the history of Christ's own deeds had been set forth in the Gospel. Now the writer declares that his object in the first work had been to explain what "Jesus *began* to do and teach." He had not, any more than the other Evangelists, aimed at giving a complete life of Jesus, but only an explanation of those *principles* of His teaching, and those great acts in His life, on which the *foundations* of the new society were to be laid. If then the second book be meant to carry on the history in the same spirit in which it had been commenced, we shall expect to find in it no more than what the disciples *began* to do and teach when Jesus was gone away from them. And such unity of purpose, and consequently of treatment, is all the more to be looked for because both books are written to the same person.

That the Acts of the Apostles is a work of this character, a history of *beginnings* only, will be apparent from a very brief examination of its contents. We are told by the writer that Christ, before His ascension, marked out the course which should be taken in the publication of the Gospel. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Taking these words for his theme the author directs his labour to shew in what manner the teaching of the Apostles was *begun* in each of these appointed fields of labour, and he does no more. He mentions the eleven Apostles by name at the outset, to imply thereby that each one took his due share in the work of evangelization, though it will not come within the historian's purpose to describe that share. And with like brevity he relates how the Apostolic band was completed by the election of Matthias into the place of Judas. This done, he turns to his proper theme,

which is what Jesus *began* to do through the Spirit after His ascension. He tells us how the disciples, filled with the Holy Ghost, preached in Jerusalem until it was declared by the lips of their adversaries (Acts v. 28) that the city was filled with their doctrine. After this *commencement* we hear but little of the work done in Jerusalem. The author's next step is to relate how from the Holy City the mission of the disciples was extended into Judæa and Samaria. To make this intelligible he found it needful to describe with some detail the events which led to the death of Stephen, and before that to point out the position which the first martyr held in the new society. And as the defence which Stephen made before the Jewish rulers forms what may be called the Apology to the Jews for the universalism of Christianity, we have the argument of that speech given at some length. The time had arrived when the Gospel was to be published to others than Jews, and we can see from the charges laid against Stephen that this further spread of their labours had been dwelt upon in the addresses of the Christian teachers. Blasphemous words spoken against the Temple and the Law would be but a vague accusation were it not explained by the defence which was made in reply to it. From this defence we can see that the provocation which had roused the Jews against Stephen was the doctrine that God was the God not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, and that His worship was no longer to be restricted to any particular locality as heretofore. To prove to his hearers that this was shewn in their own history and taught by their own prophets, Stephen points out that it was not in the Holy Land, to which they attached such sanctity, that God first appeared to Abraham, but in Mesopotamia; that God was with him also in Haran, and that when He had brought "the father of the faithful" into Canaan, He gave no permanent possession therein either to him or to his descendants for many generations. Yet though the people of Israel were for a long time strangers in Egypt God was with them there. He blessed them so that they multiplied exceedingly, and manifested His constant care of them in their slavery until at last He sent them a deliverer in Moses. This prophet God had trained first in Pharaoh's court

and then in the land of Midian, and had manifested His presence to him in a special manner in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, and all these tokens of God's care for His people had been shewn without any preference on the part of Jehovah for one place above another.

The mention of Moses leads the speaker into a brief digression, in which he compares the rebellious behaviour of the Israelites towards their deliverer, with the hostile disposition of the Jews towards Jesus. But he soon resumes the thread of his argument, and points out that the Tabernacle, and with it the visible sign of God's presence among His chosen people, was moving from place to place for forty years in the wilderness, and that when the people came into Canaan there was no thought of a fixed abode for the Tabernacle until the days of David : that then God did not at once permit the building of the Temple which that king designed to raise, and when Solomon was allowed to build God's house, yet, as Stephen reminds his hearers, the voice of their prophets still testified that the Most High did not dwell in temples made with hands, but sat in heaven, while earth was as His footstool, and that He was the Maker and Preserver not of one race, but of all men. This language, enforcing, from a review of their own history and prophecies, the position which Stephen had taken up in the defence of the new doctrine, and rather going beyond, than defending himself against, the accusation of his opponents, roused their indignation, and, apparently perceiving this, the speaker concludes his defence not with a peroration, but with a solemn rebuke, in which he says that, with all their zeal for the Law they have not kept the true spirit of that heaven-sent deposit of which they had been made the guardians. Provoked still more by such a declaration the crowd breaks out into a furious rage, and by stoning Stephen and persecuting all who adhered to his cause, endeavours to stop the spread of the Christian doctrines, but these persecutions become the cause of a still wider propagation of the new teaching and effect the very object to which the Jews were so strongly opposed.

This is the longest speech contained in the Acts, and the

great prominence given to it by the author seems to harmonize with what we judge to be his general design. For this address was the first defence of the wider extension of the preaching of the disciples, and on such initiatory stages of the movement it is after the author's manner to dwell.

He next proceeds with the history of the propagation of Christ's doctrine in Judæa and Samaria, and as if to indicate at once that the message was now to be spread to the farthest corners of the earth, Philip's mission to the Ethiopian eunuch is mentioned that we may be informed concerning the firstfruits of the faith in Africa; but the story is carried no farther, nor have we any after-record concerning Philip, except the notice (xxi. 8) which seems to imply that he made his home for the future in Cæsarea, where the population would be mainly Gentiles.

Saul's conversion and Peter's visit to Cornelius may be called companion pictures meant to display the two lines of activity by which the conversion of the Gentiles was to be brought about. The one mission, initiated by St Peter, was to those among the heathen who, like the centurion of Cæsarea, had been already led to some partial knowledge of God, through the study of the Jewish Scriptures. On the other hand the great Apostle of the Gentiles was sent forth to his allotted work among those who were to be turned (Acts xiv. 15) "from their vanities to serve the living God which made heaven and earth and all things therein."

As soon as Peter's share in the *beginning* of this mission is concluded, and he has twice testified concerning it (xi. 4—17, xv. 7—11) that his action had been prompted by a Divine revelation, and that the propriety of what he had done was confirmed by the witness of the Holy Spirit, our historian dismisses him, the most energetic of the original twelve, from his narrative, because the other *beginnings* of Gospel-preaching among the heathen can be better explained by following the career of St Paul, the chief pioneer of the Christian faith as it spread to the ends of the earth. Still through the whole of what is related concerning the labours of that Apostle, we learn only of the *founding* of Churches and societies, and of the *initial*

steps of the Christian work in the places which he visited. We are indeed told that St Paul proposed, some time after the completion of their first missionary journey (xv. 36), that he and Barnabas should go and visit those cities in which they had already preached the word of the Lord. But that proposal came to naught, and the Apostle with Silas then visited only Lystra and Derbe, and that apparently for the sole purpose of taking Timothy as a companion in his further labours. After this visit, the account of which is summed up in three verses, the whole of the second journey was made over new ground. Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens and Corinth were visited, and probably in all these places, and in others unnamed, the *beginnings* of a Christian society were established. We know that it was so in three of these cities. In returning by sea to Jerusalem the Apostle touched at Ephesus, but remained there so short a time that his real work in that metropolis can hardly be dated from this visit. We are only told that he entered into the Synagogue and reasoned with the Jews (xviii. 19), no mention being made of what was his special work, the mission to the Gentiles. But on his third journey, as though he had foreseen how "great a door and effectual" was opened to him in Ephesus, he chose that city as the first scene of his settled labours, and continued there for the greater part of three years, and became in that time, we cannot doubt, the founder of the Asiatic Churches of the Apocalypse. From thence he passed over to Macedonia, but though this journey is noticed there is no word told us concerning the Churches which had been founded there by St Paul and his companions on the previous visit, nor concerning his labours in Greece whither he afterwards went. Nay even though he made a special halt on his homeward voyage at Philippi, where was a congregation which above all others was a deep joy to the Apostle, we have not a detail recorded of the condition in which he found the brethren whom he so much loved. Very little had been said concerning the results of the former stay at Troas (xvi. 8—11) to indicate whether any Christian brotherhood had been established there; and it may be that the missionaries were forbidden of the Spirit at that time to preach

in Troas as in the rest of Asia. For this reason, it seems, the historian dwells more at length (xx. 6—12) on the residence of St Paul in that city during his third journey, in such wise as to make clear to us that here too the work of Christ was now *begun*. After that, during the whole course of the voyage, with the exception of the invitation of the Ephesian elders to Miletus and the solemn parting address given to them there, in which we hear repeated echoes of the language of St Paul's Epistles, there is no mention of any stay at places where the work of Evangelization had already commenced. And when Jerusalem is reached the imprisonment speedily follows, and the writer afterwards records merely those stages in the Apostle's history which led up to his visit to Rome. He might have told us much of the two years passed in Cæsarea, during which St Paul's friends were not forbidden "to minister or to come unto him." He might have told us much of those two other years of the Roman imprisonment, of which he knew the termination. But this entered not into his plan of writing. So he has made no attempt to write a history of St Paul, any more than of St Peter. As soon as we have heard that the message of the Gospel was published first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles in the empire-city of the world in that age, the author pauses from his labour. He had completed the task which he undertook: he had described what Jesus, through His messengers, *began* to do and teach, after His ascension into heaven, for in reaching Rome the message of the Gospel has potentially come "to the uttermost parts of the earth."

II. THE TITLE.

It will be clear from what has been already said of its contents that the title, by which the book is known to us, can hardly have been given to it by its author. The work is certainly not "The Acts of the Apostles." It contains no detailed account of the work of any of the Apostles except Peter and Paul. John is mentioned on three occasions, but he appears rather as the companion of Peter than as the doer of any special act by himself.

Of James the son of Zebedee we have no notice except of his execution by Herod, while much more space is devoted to Stephen and Philip, who were not Apostles, than to him; and the same remark applies to the notices of Timothy and Silas. We may conclude then that the title, as we now have it, was a later addition. The author (Acts i. 1) calls the Gospel "a treatise" (λόγος), a term the most general that could be used; and if that work were styled by him "the first treatise," the Acts would most naturally receive the name of "the second treatise." Or it may be that the form of title given in the *Cod. Sinaiticus* was its first appellation. There the book is called simply "Acts," and for a while that designation may have been sufficient to distinguish it from other books. But it was not long before treatises came into circulation concerning the doings of individual Apostles and Bishops, and these were known by such titles as "The Acts of Peter and Paul," "The Acts of Timothy," "The Acts of Paul and Thecla," &c. It would become necessary, as such literature increased and was circulated, to enlarge the title of this original volume of "Acts," and from such exigency we find in various MSS. different titles given to it, such as "Acts of the Apostles," "Acting of Apostles," "Acts of all the Apostles," "Acts of the Holy Apostles," with still longer additions in MSS. of later date.

III. THE AUTHOR.

All the traditions of the early Church ascribe the authorship of the Acts to the writer of the third Gospel, and Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* II. 11) says, "Luke, by race a native of Antioch and by profession a physician, having associated mainly with Paul and having companied with the rest of the Apostles less closely, has left us examples of that healing of souls which he acquired from them in two inspired books, the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles." Eusebius lived about 325 A.D. Before his time Tertullian, A.D. 200, speaks (*De jejuniis*, 10) of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles and of Peter going up to the housetop to pray, as facts mentioned in the com-

mentary of Luke. Also (*De baptismo*, 10) he says, "We find in the Acts of the Apostles that they who had received the baptism of John had not received the Holy Ghost, of which indeed they had not even heard." Similar quotations could be drawn from Clement of Alexandria, a little anterior to Tertullian, and also from Irenæus, who wrote about A.D. 190. The earliest clear quotation from the Acts is contained in a letter preserved in Eusebius (*H. E.* v. 2) sent by the Churches in the south of Gaul to the Christians of Asia and Phrygia and written A.D. 177, concerning the persecutions of the Church in Gaul. Alluding to some who had been martyred there, the writers say, "They prayed for those who arranged their torments as did Stephen, that perfect martyr, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'" In still earlier writings there may be allusions to the Acts, but they are not sufficiently distinct to warrant their insertion as quotations. But in the scarcity of writings at this early period we need not be surprised if a century elapsed after the writing of the book before we can discover traces of its general circulation. It was probably completed, as we shall see, between A.D. 60—70, and if in a hundred years from that time the Christians of Europe can quote from it as a book well known to their brethren in Asia we may feel quite sure that it had been in circulation, and generally known among Christians, for a large portion of the intervening century. Modern critics have doubted the existence of the Acts at the date when this letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons was written, and have argued thus: "The tradition of St Stephen's martyrdom, and the memory of his noble sayings, may well have remained in the Church, or have been recorded in writings then current, from one of which indeed eminent critics conjecture that the author of Acts derived his materials[1]." As if it were easier to admit on conjecture the existence of writings for which no particle of evidence is forthcoming, than to allow, in agreement with most ancient tradition, that "the Acts" was composed at the date to which, on the face of his work, the writer lays claim.

In his book the author makes no mention of himself by

[1] *Supernatural Religion*, III. 25.

name, though in the latter part of his narrative he very frequently employs the pronoun "we," intimating thereby that he was present at the events which in that portion of his work he is describing. The passages in which this pronoun is found (xvi. 10—17; xx. 5—38; xxi. 1—18; xxvii.; xxviii.) deserve special notice. The author of the Acts, by his allusion in the opening words to his "former treatise," leads us to the belief that in this second work he is about again to use material which he gathered from those who had been eyewitnesses and ministers in the scenes which he describes. Much of this material he has clearly cast into such a shape as fitted his purpose, and much which was no doubt at hand for him he did not use because of the special aim which in his treatise he had in view. It is very difficult to believe that an author who has in other parts systematically shaped other men's communications, many of which would naturally be made to him in the first person, into a strictly historical narrative, should in four places of his work have forgotten to do this, and have left standing the "we" of those persons from whom he received his information. It seems much more natural to infer that the passages in question are really the contributions of the writer himself and that, on the occasions to which they refer, he was himself a companion of St Paul. For whoever the writer may have been he was neither neglectful nor ignorant of the rules of literary composition, as may be seen by the opening words both of the Gospel and the Acts.

But it has been alleged that anyone who had been the companion of St Paul at those times, to which reference is made by the passages we are considering, would have had much more and greater things to tell us than the writer of the Acts has here set down. This would be quite true if the author had set out with the intention of writing a life of St Paul. But, as has been observed before, this is exactly what he did not do. His book is a description of the *beginnings* of Christianity. And with this in mind we can see that the matters on which he dwells are exactly those which we should expect him to notice. In the first passage (xvi. 10—17) he describes the events which were connected with the *planting of the first Christian Church* in

Europe at Philippi, and though the word "we" only occurs in the verses cited above, it would be ridiculous to suppose that he, who wrote those words implying a personal share in what was done, was not a witness of all that took place while Paul and Silas remained in Philippi. A like remark applies to the second passage (xx. 5—38). Here too the word "we" is not found after verse 15 where we read "we came to Miletus." But surely having been with St Paul up to this point, we have no reason to think that the writer was absent at the time of that earnest address which the Apostle gave to the Ephesian elders whom he summoned to Miletus to meet him; an address which is exactly in the style that we should, from his Epistles, expect St Paul to have used, and which we may therefore judge the writer of the Acts to have heard from the Apostle's lips, and in substance to have faithfully reported.

The next passage (xxi. 1—18) brings the voyagers to Jerusalem, and there the writer represents himself as one who went with St Paul to meet James and the Christian elders when the Apostle was about to give an account of his ministry among the Gentiles. But though after that the story falls again, as a history should, into the third person, have we any right to conclude from this that the writer who had come so far with his friend, left him after he had reached the Holy City? Surely it is more natural to suppose that he remained near at hand, and that we have in his further narrative the results of his personal observation and enquiry, especially as when the pronoun "we" again appears in the document it is (xxvii. 1) to say "it was determined that *we* should sail into Italy." The writer who had been the companion of St Paul to Jerusalem is at his side when he is to be sent to Rome. The events intervening had been such that there was no place for the historian to speak in his own person, but the moment when he is allowed again to become St Paul's companion in travel, the personal feature reappears, and the writer continues to be eyewitness of all that was done till Rome was reached, and perhaps even till the Apostle was set free, for he notes carefully the length of time that the imprisonment lasted.

That the writer of the Acts does not mention St Paul's Epistles is what we should expect. He was with St Paul, and not with any of those congregations to which the Epistles were addressed, while as we have said, the *planting* of the Church, and not the further edification thereof was what he set before him to be recorded in the Acts. Moreover we are not to look upon St Luke as with St Paul in the same capacity as Timothy, Silas, or Aristarchus. He was for the Apostle "the beloved physician"; a Christian brother it is true, but abiding with St Paul because of his physical needs rather than as a prominent sharer in his missionary labours.

The passages in question seem to give us one piece of definite information about their writer. They shew us that he accompanied St Paul from Troas as far as Philippi, and there they leave him. But they further shew that it was exactly in the same region that the Apostle, when returning to Asia for the last time, renewed the interrupted companionship, which from that time till St Paul's arrival in Rome seems only to have been interrupted while he was under the charge of the Roman authorities. If we suppose, as the title given to him warrants us in doing, that Theophilus was some official, perhaps in Roman employ; that he lived (and his name is Greek) in the region of Macedonia; then the third Gospel may very well have been written for his use by St Luke while he remained in Macedonia, and the Acts subsequently when St Paul had been set free. In this way addressing one who would know how the writer came to Macedonia with St Paul, and went away again as that Apostle's companion, the places in which the author has allowed "we" to stand in his narrative are exactly those in which the facts of the case would dictate its retention.

Nor is this personal portion of the writer's narrative so unimportant as has been alleged by some critics. The founding of the Church at Philippi may be called the recorded birthday of European Christendom. And for the writer of the Acts it was not unimportant to tell us that a Christian Church was established at Troas, when he had said in an earlier place that on a former visit they were forbidden of the Spirit to preach the

word in Asia. Who moreover can reckon the address at Miletus an unimportant document in early Church history? Does it not shew us how the prescient mind of the Apostle saw the signs of the times, the germs of those heretical opinions which he lived to find more fully developed, and against which he afterwards had to warn Timothy and Titus, against which too almost all the letters of the other Apostles are more or less directed? And how the 'Apostle of the Gentiles' was brought to Rome was a subject which could not but find full place in a history of the *beginnings* of the Gospel. For though the writer of the Acts fully acknowledges the existence of a Christian Church in Rome before St Paul's arrival, it was a part of his purpose to shew us how that Church was for the first time strengthened by the personal guidance and direction of one of the Apostles.

The letters of St Paul bear their witness to St Luke's presence with the Apostle when he was a prisoner in Rome; for in the Epistle to Philemon, written from Rome during this first imprisonment, the writer sends to Philemon the salutation of Luke (ver. 24) as one of his fellow-labourers, and in the Epistle to the Colossians (iv. 14) he is also mentioned as "Luke the beloved physician." Indeed it seems very probable that St Luke afterwards continued to be the companion of St Paul, for in a later Epistle (2 Tim. iv. 11) we find him saying, "Only Luke is with me."

That "the beloved physician" was the writer both of the Gospel and of the Acts may perhaps also be inferred from the use which the author makes of technical medical terms in his description of diseases, as in the account of Simon's wife's mother (Luke iv. 38), in the story of the woman with the issue of blood (viii. 43, 44) and in his narration of the agony of Christ (xxii. 44). Also in the description of the cripple at the Temple gate (Acts iii. 7), in the notice of the death of Herod Agrippa (xii. 23), and when he writes of the blindness of Elymas (xiii. 11), and of the sickness of the father of Publius in Melita (xxviii. 8). A comparison of the Greek phraseology of the Gospel and of the Acts leads also to the conclusion that the two books

are from the same hand. It should further be noticed that there are more than fifty words used in the Gospel and also in the Acts which are not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

This work, as well as the Gospel, being anonymous, attempts have been made to refer the authorship to some other person than St Luke, seeing that it is only assigned to him by tradition, and his name never appears in the story as do the names of other actors in the work. Some critics have suggested that Timothy was the author of those sections in which the plural pronoun "we" occurs, because in the letters addressed to the Corinthians, Thessalonians and Philippians, St Paul mentions Timothy with great affection as his fellow-preacher. It is argued that whoever wrote the narrative of the Acts must have been in very close relation to St Paul at the time when he visited Corinth and Thessalonica and Philippi, and that the name of such a man would not have been omitted, at all events, from the opening greetings of all these Epistles. But we can see from Acts xx. 4—5 that there was an intimate companion of St Paul, who for some reason remained at his side when the others could leave him, and who there states expressly that he was with the Apostle when Timothy had gone away. And the suggestion of those who think that Luke the physician was taken with him by St Paul because of the bodily infirmities under which the Apostle laboured, and that it is in this capacity, rather than as a fellow-preacher, that St Luke was in such close attendance during the missionary journeys, is worthy of consideration. If this were so, Luke, though the writer of the diary, yet would not come so prominently before the Churches in the various cities which were visited, as those companions of St Paul who were fellow-missionaries, and this would explain why he is omitted in the greetings of the letters afterwards written by St Paul to the newly-founded congregations. Moreover, the physician would be the one person who would naturally remain in attendance, when the fellow-preachers had gone forth on their several ways.

Nor is there any better ground for supposing, as some have done, that Silas is the narrator who writes in the first person.

We have only to look at Acts xv. 22, where, in the portion of the narrative which, according to this hypothesis, must have been written by Silas, he is spoken of as a "chief man among the brethren," to see that Silas could not be the writer of such a notice concerning himself.

And the argument which would make Silas (i.e. *Silvanus*), and Luke (i.e. *Lucanus*), two names belonging to one and the same person, because the one is derived from *silva*=a wood, and the other from *lucus*=a grove, and so their sense is cognate, does not merit much consideration. It is said in support of this view that Silas and Luke are never mentioned together. But it is plain from the story of the preaching and arrest of Paul and Silas at Philippi, that the writer who there speaks in the first person plural was a different person from Silas (cf. Acts xvi. 16—19). And with regard to the cognate signification of the two names it should be borne in mind that when such double appellations were given to the same person they were not derived from the same language. *Cephas* and *Thomas* are Aramaic, while *Peter* and *Didymus* are Greek. But *Silvanus* and *Lucanus* have both a Latin origin.

With still less ground has it been suggested that Titus was the author of these personal sections and that some later writer incorporated them in his work. Titus was with St Paul in his missionary journeys, as we know from the second Epistle to the Corinthians, but to accept him as author of "the Acts" would be to prefer a theory of modern invention before the tradition which, though not capable of exact verification, has the voice of long antiquity in its favour. We are therefore inclined to give the weight which it deserves to the ancient opinion, and to accept the traditional view of the origin of both the Gospel and the Acts, rather than any of the modern suppositions, which are very difficult to be reconciled with the statements in the Acts and the Epistles, and which are the mere offspring of critical imaginations.

IV. DATE OF THE WORK.

That the writer was one who lived amid the events with which he deals will be clear to any one who will consider how he connects his narrative with contemporary history, and that in no case can he be proved to have fallen into error. We find him speaking of Gamaliel (Acts v. 34) exactly as what we know from other sources about that doctor of the Law would lead us to expect a contemporary to speak. In the same place he deals with historical events in connection with Theudas and Judas, and it has been shewn in the notes that there is great probability that in all he says he is correct, for he speaks of the latter of these rebels with more exactness than is found in Josephus, while the former has probably been unnamed by that writer because the rebellion in which Theudas was concerned was comprised under the general description that he gives of the numerous outbreaks with which Judæa was at that time disturbed.

Again, the writer of the Acts brings Cæsarea before us exactly in the condition in which we know it to have been under Roman government in the period before the destruction of Jerusalem. He alludes (xi. 28) to the famine in the days of Claudius Cæsar, in language which only one who had personal knowledge of the event would have used. He gives a notice of Herod Agrippa which accords with Josephus in most minute details, and which shews that the writer of the description was most intimately acquainted with the circumstances which attended that monarch's death. In his mention of Cyprus he makes it clear by the designation which he uses for the Roman governor of that island that he was conversant with all the circumstances of its government, which had but recently undergone a change, as is pointed out in the notes on St Paul's visit to Cyprus. Of the same character is his very precise notice of the magisterial titles in Thessalonica and Malta. He employs in his narrative about these places no general expression, signifying "ruler" or "chief man," but gives the special names of the officials there, using words far from common, and which modern investigations have proved to be of that precision which bespeaks a personal

acquaintance with the condition of the districts to which the writer refers.

It is noteworthy too that he introduces at Ephesus the burning of the books of magic exactly at that place where, almost above any city in the whole of Asia, such acts were held in the greatest repute. So too the whole dialogue which he records when Paul was rescued by the chief captain in Jerusalem is full of incidental allusions to the tumults and disorders with which Judæa was afflicted at the time, allusions which would hardly have been made, and certainly not so naturally and without all comment, by a writer who put together the story of the Acts at a time long after the Apostles were dead. The mention of the large force told off to convey Paul to Cæsarea is just one of those notices which a later writer would never have invented. A body-guard of *four hundred and seventy* men for the conveyance of a single prisoner would have seemed out of all proportion except to one who when he wrote knew that the whole land was infested with bands of outlaws, and that these desperadoes could be hired for any outrage at the shortest notice.

In the same way Felix, Festus and Agrippa are brought before us in exact harmony with what we learn of their history and characters from other sources, and with none of that description which a late writer would have been sure to introduce, while a contemporary would know it to be unnecessary. Even the speech of Tertullus before Felix, both by what it says and what it omits, in its words of flattery, is evidence that we are dealing with the writing of one who lived through the events of which he has given us the history.

But it is in the frequent notices of Jerusalem that the most cogent evidence is to be found for the date of the writer. That city was destroyed by the Romans A.D. 70, but in the whole of the Acts there is no single word to indicate that the author of this book knew anything of that event or even of the causes whose operation brought it about. The city is always mentioned as still in its grandeur; the Temple services and sacrifices continue to be observed; at the great feasts the crowds of strangers assemble as the Law enjoined, and among its population the

Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees act the same parts which they do in the Gospel histories; localities such as Solomon's porch, and the field Akeldama, the tower of Antonia and its near neighbourhood to the Temple, are spoken of as though still existing and as well-marked spots; the synagogues erected in the city for the foreign Jews are mentioned, and the writer speaks of them as places which would be well known to his readers. Annas and Caiaphas and Ananias are to him no characters removed by long years of past history, but recent holders of office in the city which was still standing in all security. These features, so many and so various, of contemporary knowledge mark the Acts as a book which must have been written before the overthrow of Jerusalem, and as the narrative terminates about the year 63 A.D., we conclude that its composition must have been completed very soon after that date, and probably not later than A.D. 66. About the latter year St Paul was martyred at Rome, and had the writer of the Acts known of that event it is very difficult to imagine that he should have made no allusion to it in such passages as those in which the Apostle declares his expectation of death and his readiness to suffer in the cause of Christ.

But not only does the writer of the Acts move easily in his narrative as if amid contemporary history, and give notices of persons and places like one to whom actual experience in what he writes about makes his footing sure, but he has also left an undesigned testimony to the date at which he wrote in the character of his narrative. We know that before the end of the first century the Christian Church was troubled by the rise of much false doctrine. In the New Testament we have a few allusions to false teachers, as when it is said of Hymenæus and Alexander (1 Tim. i. 19, 20) that they "have made shipwreck concerning the faith," and (2 Tim. ii. 17, 18) of Hymenæus and Philetus, that they "have erred concerning the truth." But from other sources we learn much more than from Holy Writ concerning these first heretical teachers. The earliest and most prominent among them were the Gnostics, who derived their name from the pretensions which they made to superior know-

ledge (*gnosis*). This knowledge, as they taught, distinguished the more elevated among mankind from the vulgar, for whom faith and traditional opinion were said to be sufficient. These teachers also perverted the Scriptures by great license in the use of allegorical explanation; they held that from God had emanated generations of spiritual beings, whom they named *Æons*, and who, from the description given of them, are seen to be impersonations of the Divine attributes. By the Gnostics matter was declared to be evil, but superior knowledge could enable men either by asceticism to become superior to it, or if they indulged in excesses, to do so without harm. These heretics also denied the resurrection of the body. One of their number, Cerinthus, taught that Christ was one of the Æons, and that he descended upon the man Jesus at His baptism, and gave Him the power of working miracles, but departed from Him before His crucifixion. There were many other forms assumed by their various heretical doctrines, but what has been said will be a sufficient notice of their character for us to see how free from all knowledge of such speculations was the writer of the Acts. He mentions the opposition of the Judaizing Christians, those of the Circumcision, and he records in many places the violent assaults made on the first missionaries by those sections of the heathen population who saw that the spread of Christianity would interfere with their sources of gain, but of Gnosticism in any of its phases he has never a word, though that kind of teaching was widely spread before the end of the first century. It is therefore to be believed that his history was composed before such heretical teaching had spread, or even made itself much known, or else we must suppose that the writer, though aware of the existence of all these errors, has yet been able to compile a narrative of the early years of the Church without giving us a hint of what had been developed within her at the time when he wrote. He has brought forward St Paul speaking at Miletus (xx. 29, 30), "I know that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them;" and yet on such a passage he has given no sign that the

words of the Apostle had been exactly verified. To suppose that the writer could thus compose his book and never shew that he knew of the later course of the history of the Church, if he did know of it, is quite as difficult as to conceive that he was aware of the overthrow of the Holy City, and yet, though making mention of Jerusalem in almost every chapter, he has never let fall a word in which he intimates his knowledge that the city no longer existed. The only safe conclusion to which a consideration of these characteristics of the Acts can lead us is that the author wrote as he has done because, at the time when he was writing, Gnosticism had not been spread abroad, nor was Jerusalem destroyed.

The absence of any allusions to the writings of St Paul in the Acts is a piece of the same kind of evidence for the early date of its composition. Many of the Pauline Epistles were no doubt written and in the possession of those Churches to which they were addressed before the composition of the Acts, but they had not yet been widely circulated, and so were probably unknown to St Luke. There are, however, some points in the history, which he has given us, that derive support from the Epistles. Thus the provision for widows, alluded to Acts vi. 1, was a new feature of social obligation introduced by Christianity. In the narrative of St Luke we are shewn that this was one of the earliest cares of the infant Church, and that it even took precedence of all that we now embrace under the name of public worship. Consonant with this part of the early Christian organization are the regulations given by St Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. v. 9) concerning provision for the widows in the Church over which he was to preside. Again the historian gives in several places the account of Saul's conversion after he had been a persecutor of the Christians; in entire accord with this the Apostle speaks of himself (1 Tim. i. 13) as "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," but as having "obtained mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief." St Paul tells of his escape from Damascus (2 Cor. xi. 32) in language which agrees with what we read in the Acts (ix. 23—25). In like manner he makes mention (Gal. i. 18) of his visit to Jerusalem to see Peter

and James exactly as St Luke mentions it in the history (Acts ix. 28). We learn from the Acts (xii. 17) that James was president of the Church in Jerusalem, and with that agrees the testimony of St Paul (Gal. ii. 9), while the persecutions which the Apostle underwent in Lystra, Antioch and Iconium, of which the historian speaks at some length (Acts xiii., xiv.), are mentioned by St Paul when he is writing to Timothy, a native of Lystra (2 Tim. iii. 10, 11), as matters about which the latter had full knowledge. So too the letters of St Paul confirm the history in the Acts with reference to the sufferings endured by the Apostle in his mission to Macedonia. Speaking of these sufferings he reminds the Philippians (i. 30) that their conflict is of the same kind as they had seen him endure. He alludes also (ii. 22) to their knowledge of the character of Timothy whom St Luke mentions as one of St Paul's companions in that journey. And at an earlier period when writing to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. i. 6) he makes mention of the great affliction under which they had received the word of the Gospel, and specially names (ii. 2) the shameful treatment to which he and his companions had been subjected at Philippi. Then the teaching recorded at Athens in which the Apostle points out how men from natural religion should be led to "seek the Lord if haply they may feel after Him and find Him" has its counterpart in what is said in the opening of the Epistle to the Romans. There too St Paul declares that the invisible things of God, even His eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, so that men are without excuse. While the quotation from Aratus in that same speech on Mars' Hill is exactly in the style of St Paul as may be seen from similar quotations made by him 1 Cor. xv. 33 and Titus i. 12, while no other N. T. writer is found quoting from the works of heathen authors.

Again both history and letters shew us how St Paul laboured with his own hands for the support both of himself and those who were with him. St Luke mentions the working with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth (xviii. 3) and puts a reference to the like conduct at Ephesus into the Apostle's mouth (xx. 34) when he is speaking to the elders at Miletus. The passages which confirm

to be "unto all people," and the newborn King while "the glory of God's people Israel" was also heralded from the first as to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles."

Another objection to the narrative in the Acts is that the book marks no rupture with Judaism. To bring this objection into prominence much stress is laid by those who use it on the severity with which St Paul speaks of the Judaizers in some parts of his letters, notably in the Epistle to the Galatians. From the language there used it is argued that the Apostle had broken altogether with Judaism, and that the picture of his life and labours as we have received it in the Acts is untrustworthy. Now first of all it is extremely unlikely that the preachers of Christ's Gospel, with His example before them, would sever themselves from their Jewish brethren until circumstances arose which forced them to do so. Our Lord had been a devout Jew while rebuking without measure what was deserving of rebuke in Pharisaic Judaism. And what we have set before us in the Acts, first in the doings of the twelve, and then in the story of St Paul is in natural sequence to the Gospel history. Peter and John going up to the temple at the hour of prayer is the link which binds one history to the other, and it is a link which would not lightly be broken, for who could be so powerfully appealed to by the first Evangelists as those who had the ancient scriptures already in their hands?

And in St Paul's case a distinction should be made between Judaism and Judaizers. He knew that Judaism must pass away, yet how tenderly, lovingly he deals in his letters with the devout Jew. The Judaizers, who were of set purpose an obstacle and hindrance to the work of the Gospel, he cannot away with. They are the men who desire merely "to make a fair shew in the flesh," who preach "another Gospel," and therefore are to the Apostle anathema. But he could still see constantly in the Law the pædagogue which was to bring men to Christ; and how near his heart his own people were we can discern from that Moses-like language of his written to the Romans at the same time that he wrote in his severest strain to the misleading Judaizers among the Galatians. In what a truly tender light St Paul regarded all

that was Jewish is seen from his words to the Romans (Rom. ix. 1—5) "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever." Now this very same feeling is shewn to us in the Acts. There to the Jews he becomes a Jew that he may gain them for the Gospel. He follows the advice of the brethren in Jerusalem and takes on him the Nazarite vow, and in his speech before the Council he shrinks not from saying "I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees," exactly in accord with the spirit which dictates again his argument to the Romans (xi. 1) "Did God cast off His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite." And those whom God had not cast off we may rest sure St Paul had not cast off, nor made with them such a breach as is suggested by those who argue from some expressions in his Epistles that the behaviour described in the Acts is not such as St Paul would have shewn to the other disciples nor they to him.

Again it is said that in the Acts Peter is represented as Pauline in all he says and does and Paul's conduct is pictured as in complete harmony with Peter's. But to those who believe that these two were both Apostles of the same Jesus, both preachers of the same Evangel, both guided by the same Holy Spirit, there is nothing but what is natural in this. The historian brings both before us as labouring for the same work, the extension of the Gospel according to Christ's command from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. He gives us only short abstracts of what either preacher said, and is it not to be supposed that there would be great similarity in the drift of their addresses? Their main theme must be the Resurrection as a proof of the Divinity and the Messiahship of Jesus. Their chief exhortation "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins."

But this figment of a Pauline and a Petrine party never entered into the thoughts of either Luke or Paul or Peter. There were partizans of Paul and of Peter at Corinth, it is true, but we know how they were rebuked by Paul himself, who bade them remember that Christ was not divided. Nor is there any evidence worth the name that His Apostles were divided. Paul tells us how he rebuked Peter because he stood condemned by the inconsistency of his own actions. But it was the rebuke of a friend and not of an opponent, for in the same chapter he speaks of Peter as one who had been entrusted by the Spirit with the Gospel of the circumcision, and who had given to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as labourers in a common cause though in different fields. But neither in the Acts nor in the Epistles have we any warrant for that opinion which is so prominent in the Clementine fictions of the second century. There, without being named, St Paul is alluded to by Peter "as the man who is mine enemy," and under the guise of Simon Magus is attacked for reproving Peter at Antioch. These writings are a most worthless ground on which to base any argument at all. Their author, whoever he may have been, durst not mention St Paul by name, so doubtful is he of the acceptance which his work will meet with; and yet it is of these works that writers who deny the fidelity of the New Testament documents assert "there is scarcely a single writing which is of so great importance for the history of Christianity in its first stage." It is out of these fictions that the Petrine and Pauline parties have been evolved. The writings of Justin Martyr, who knew the sentiments of Christians in the Holy Land at the beginning of the second century, have no trace of these parties, neither is there a trace to be found in what is left us of the writings of that Judæo-Christian Hegesippus. And if these men, who were in the position to know most about it, have no word of the matter, we can only conclude that the opposition so much dwelt on did not exist, but that, just as in the Acts we have it set before us, the preaching of Peter and Paul was in entire harmony. For them Christ was not divided, nor did their doctrine differ except so far as was made necessary by the con-

dition of the audiences which they addressed. For a fuller discussion of this subject than is here possible, and for demonstration that there was no antagonism between Paul and the rest of the Apostles, the reader is referred to Dr Lightfoot's Essay on "St Paul and the Three" in his Edition of the Epistle to the Galatians.

I have to thank several friends for their kind interest in the first part of the Acts and for some suggestions which, as far as was possible, have been embodied in the notes. But I desire specially to express my acknowledgement of the help which I have derived in matters of Jewish learning and antiquities from my friend Dr Schiller-Szinessy, to whose abundant stores of knowledge the enquirer seems always welcome.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

I—14. *Link connecting this book with St Luke's Gospel. Detailed account of the Ascension.*

THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all 1
that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day *in* 2

I. 1—14. Link connecting this book with St Luke's Gospel. Detailed account of the Ascension.

The Title. According to the best MSS. this should be simply "Acts of Apostles." The *Cod. Sin.* gives only "Acts." The former of these titles, while having most authority, also most fitly describes the character of the composition. The book is not *The* Acts of *the* Apostles, but merely *some* Acts of *certain* Apostles which are related by the author, intermixed with the acts of others among the Christian community, where such additions were needful to make the story clear. The writer tells us in the introduction how Christ, when ascending in glory, declared what should be the course which His doctrine should take in its extension, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). To describe the fulfilment of this departing prophecy is that on which the whole book is engaged. It is natural, therefore, to find that the two chief actors are the energetic Peter, and, after his conversion, the enthusiastic Apostle of the Gentiles. But even they are only used as representative characters. The writer does not aim at giving us full details of the work of either of these Apostles. We see most of Peter and John while the preaching is confined to Jerusalem, but the narrative leaves them to recount some acts of Philip, because he was the pioneer of the Gospel in Samaria. Peter is again brought before us engaged in preaching in Judæa and Samaria and confirming the work which Philip and his companions had begun; and because the conversion of Cornelius was the beginning of the proclamation of Christ's message beyond the Jewish race, we have a full account of St Peter's mission to this first Gentile convert and of the debate which arose among the Jews in consequence. But when Peter has been present at the council of Jerusalem, at which was finally settled the relation between the Jews and Gentiles who became Christians, we lose sight of him, and the further spread of the Gospel is summarized in a description of some of the labours of St Paul; and when he has reached the

which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the Apostles whom
3 he had chosen: to whom also he shewed himself alive after

capital of the west, to shew us that the writer contemplated no biography of St Paul, the history comes to what some have thought an abrupt close. But the writer's task was done when he had told how the great Apostle brought Christ's message to the capital of the Gentile world. See *Introduction*.

1. *The former treatise*] In the original we have the superlative adjective used, but the idiom which speaks of the *first* of two is common to Greek with many other languages. An example is found 1 Cor. xiv. 30. So Cicero, *de Inventione*, in his second book (chap. III.) calls the former book *primus liber*.

treatise] The original (λόγος) indicates rather an inartistic narrative than a history. It is a book more like a piece of Herodotus than Thucydides.

have I made] Better, I made. The time is indefinite, and we have no warrant in the text for that closer union of the two books, in point of date, which is made by the language of the A.V.

Theophilus] Nothing is known of the person to whom St Luke addresses both his Gospel and the Acts, but the adjective "most excellent" applied to him in Luke i. 3 is the same which is used in addressing Felix in a letter and in a speech (Acts xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3), and Festus (Acts xxvi. 25) in a speech; from which we are perhaps warranted in concluding that Theophilus was a person of rank, and it may be a Roman officer. Josephus uses the same word in addressing Epaphroditus, to whom he dedicates the account of his life (Vit. Josephi, *ad fin.*). The suggestion that Theophilus (=lover of God) is a name adopted by the writer to indicate any believer, is improbable. Such personification is unlike the rest of Scripture, and is not supported by evidence.

began] for the Gospel is not a history of all that Jesus did, but only an account of the foundations which He laid and on which the Church should afterwards be built. So this book is still an account of what the Lord does and teaches from heaven.

to do and teach] As in the Gospel (Luke xxiv. 19) the disciples call Jesus "a prophet mighty in *deed* and in *word*." The acts and life spake first, and then the tongue.

2. *the day in which he was taken up*] The Gospel of St Luke closes with a very brief notice of the Ascension: of which event fuller details are given in this chapter, so as to form a connection between the two treatises and to indicate the purpose with which the latter was written. See below on *v.* 8.

through the Holy Ghost] That the whole institution of the Christian Church might be Divine. The Spirit of the Lord was upon the Anointed Jesus in this as in His other works and words. Cp. Luke iv. 18.

3. *after his passion*] Literally, after he had suffered.

his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the *things* pertaining to the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together with them, 4 commanded them that *they* should not depart from Jerusa-

by many infallible proofs] The adjective here has no representative in the original. The Greek word signifies some sign or token manifest to the senses, as opposed to evidence given by witnesses. The word *infallible* has been used in the A. V. to bring out this signification. It is better to omit it. The proofs here meant are Christ's speaking, walking and eating with His disciples on several occasions after His resurrection, and giving to Thomas and the rest the clearest demonstration that He was with them in the same real body as before His death, and not in appearance only (Luke xxiv. 39, 43; John xx. 27, xxi. 13). As the verity of the Resurrection would be the basis of all the Apostolic preaching, it was necessary that such clear proofs as these should be given by Christ to the twelve who were to be His witnesses.

being seen of them forty days] Better, **appearing unto them by the space of forty days.** Christ was not continuously with the disciples, but shewed Himself to them frequently at intervals during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. The period of forty days is only mentioned here, and it has been alleged as a discrepancy between the Gospel of St Luke and the Acts that the former (Luke xxiv.) represents the Ascension as taking place on the same day as the Resurrection. It needs very little examination to disperse such an idea. The two disciples there mentioned (*v.* 13) were at Emmaus "towards evening" on the day of Christ's resurrection; they returned to Jerusalem that night and told what they had seen. But after this has been stated the chapter is broken up at *v.* 36 (which a comparison with John (xx. 26—28) shews to be an account of what took place eight days after the Resurrection), and at *vv.* 44 and 50, into three distinct sections with no necessary marks of time to unite them, and in the midst of the whole we are told that Christ opened the mind of His disciples that they might understand the Scriptures. No reasonable person would conclude that all this was done in one day. Beside which the objectors prove too much, for according to their reasoning the Ascension must have taken place at night after the two disciples had come again to Jerusalem from Emmaus.

the kingdom of God] This expression is found most frequently in the last three Evangelists, St Matthew's form being "the kingdom of heaven." It has several significations, but here, as in Mark i. 14, it includes the whole Christian dispensation, its message, progress and economy. Some traces of the nature of these communications in the forty days we find in the Gospels. The disciples were sent as Christ Himself was sent (John xx. 21), their understandings were opened that they might understand the Scriptures (Luke xxiv 45); the extent of their commission was set before them, as well as the solemn issues of their work (Mark xvi. 15, 16), and to that was added the promise of their Lord's constant presence (Matt. xxviii. 20).

lem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*,
5 ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water;
but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many
6 days hence. When they therefore were come together, they
asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore
7 again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is
not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the
8 Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive

4. *not depart from Jerusalem*] This injunction is only mentioned by St Luke (xxiv. 49). The importance of their keeping together until the Holy Ghost was given is clear. It would thus be made more manifest that, though hereafter scattered abroad, their inspiration was supplied from one common source. To the Jews, to whom the Apostles were first to speak, this would appeal, because their own prophet (Isa. ii. 3) had said "Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

ye have heard of me] This promise is alluded to (Luke xxiv. 49) and found in St John (xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26), "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things," &c. "He shall testify of me." Thus were they to be prepared as witnesses for Christ.

5. *ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*] Thus was now to be fulfilled that of which John the Baptist had spoken (Matt. iii. 11), "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Such an event, when it came to pass, could not fail to work mightily on the minds of those among Christ's Apostles who had been disciples of John, as Andrew had been (John i. 40), and probably some of the others.

6. *wilt thou...restore*] Literally, dost *thou restore* (or *art thou restoring*), but the English future gives the sense.

the kingdom to Israel] The question was asked when all the Apostles were gathered together, so that the enquiry was not dictated by the mistaken notion of some single member. It shews, as do many other remarks and questions (cp. Luke xxiv. 21, &c.), how far the Apostles were even yet from comprehending the spirituality and universality of the work to which Christ was sending them. A temporal kingdom confined to Israel is what they still contemplate. The change from the spirit which dictated the question in this verse, to that in which St Peter (Acts ii. 38, 39) preached repentance and forgiveness to all whom the Lord should call, is one of the greatest evidences of the miracle of Pentecost. Such changes can only come from above.

7. *It is not for you*, &c.] During the tutelage, as it may be called, of His disciples, our Lord constantly avoided giving a direct answer to enquiries which they addressed to Him. He checked in this way their tendency to speculate on the future, and drew their minds to their duty in the present. Cp. John xxi. 21, 22.

in his own power] The word here rendered *power* is not the same as

power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these *things*, while they 9 beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward 10 heaven as he went *up*, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why 11

that so rendered in the following verse. The sense of this first word is "absolute disposal," and we might well render it **authority.**

8. *ye shall receive power*] Something different from the profitless speculations to which they had just desired an answer, even "a mouth and wisdom which their adversaries could neither gainsay nor resist" (Luke xxi. 15). Thus would they be enabled to become Christ's witnesses.

in Jerusalem, and in all Judea] To which district all the ministrations of the Apostles were confined till the death of Stephen.

and in Samaria] Whither the first who went with authority was Philip, one of the seven (Acts viii. 5), and afterwards Peter and John.

and unto the uttermost part of the earth] Commenced by the preaching of Paul, Barnabas, Mark, Silas and Timothy, and regarded as placed on a secure footing when St Paul was once brought into the capital city of the world.

The writer keeps before him from first to last the promise contained in this verse, and leaves out of his narrative all that does not tend to illustrate its fulfilment. The work of every agent is followed so far as he is used to bring about this result and no farther. This will be noticed at each stage as we proceed, and it will be seen that it explains why among "Acts of Apostles" some works are included which were not carried on by Apostles, and why the histories of the chief agents are left incomplete.

9. *while they beheld*] That they might have as clear proof of His Ascension as they had received of the reality of His Resurrection, He is taken from them while they are still gazing on Him and with His words yet sounding in their ears. In the Gospel (xxiv. 51) it is "while He blessed them." From the narrative in this place the witnesses of the Ascension seem to have been only the eleven, and this is stated expressly in St Mark's Gospel (xvi. 14), so that although in St Luke's Gospel (xxiv. 33) the two disciples who had returned from Emmaus are related to have come unto the eleven to report what they had seen, we are not to conclude that they remained with them during all the other events recorded in that chapter, an additional evidence that that chapter relates to events which happened in the course of several days and not all in close sequence on the same day. Cp. i. 3, note.

10. *as he went up*] The preposition is not in the Greek, which has simply, *as he went.*

in white apparel] They are called *men*, but they are evidently angels.

stand ye gazing up into heaven? this *same* Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in* like manner
12 as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from
13 Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were

So the two angels are clothed in white (John xx. 12) whom Mary saw in the sepulchre after the Resurrection, and one of these is called by St Mark (xvi. 5) "a young *man* clothed in a long white garment." St Luke in the Gospel calls them "two men in shining garments" (xxiv. 4). So the "man in bright clothing," Acts x. 30, is described in xi. 13 as "an angel." This was a common Jewish expression to signify angelic or divine messengers. Cf. Talm. Jer. *Joma* v. 2, *ad fin.*

"Shimeon ha-Tsaddik (i. e. the righteous) served Israel forty years in the High-priesthood, and in the last year he said to the people, 'In this year I shall die.' They said to him: 'How dost thou know this?' He said to them: 'Every year when I was going into the Holy of Holies there was an Ancient one, *clad in white garments and with a white vail*, who went in with me and came out with me; but this year he went in with me and did not come out with me.' [On this matter] they asked of Rabbi Abuhu, 'But surely it is written: 'Nothing of mankind shall be in the tent of meeting when he [the High-priest] goes in to make atonement until his coming out again,' not even those concerning whom it is written [Ezek. i. 5] 'They had *the likeness of a man*,' even they shall not be in the tent of meeting.' He said to them: 'What is there [in this language of Shimeon] to tell me that it was a human being at all? I say it was *the Holy One*."

11. *Ye men of Galilee*] The Galilæan dialect was a marked peculiarity of the apostolic band. It seems also to have been our Lord's manner of speech. For when Peter is accused (Matt. xxvi. 73) of being one of Christ's followers the words of the accusation are "Surely thou art one of *them*, for thy speech bewrayeth thee."

shall so come] This promise of the return of Jesus, on the immediate expectation of which so many of the first Christians fixed their thoughts, explains those words in the abridged account of the Ascension in St Luke's Gospel (xxiv. 52), "They returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

12. *from the mount called Olivet*] Elsewhere usually called the mount of Olives, but in Luke xix. 29, xxi. 37, some texts give, as here, Olivet

which is from Jerusalem, &c.] Literally, *which is near* **unto** *Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey off.* The mount of Olives is on the east of Jerusalem, and must be passed by those who go from Jerusalem to Bethany. Hence St Luke's expression in the Gospel is (xxiv. 50) "He led them out as far as towards (ἕως πρὸς) Bethany."

The *sabbath day's journey* was two thousand yards or cubits [*ammoth*], and in the Babylonian Talmud, *Erubin* 51 a, there is given an elaborate account of how this precise limit was arrived at, which is such

come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode

an interesting specimen of Rabbinical reasoning, that it seems worth quoting at some length. "We have a Boraitha [i.e. a Mishna not taught officially in R. Jehudah ha-Nasi's lectures and so not embodied in the Mishna proper, but incorporated amongst the Gemara or in other ways] on Exod. xvi. 29, 'Abide ye every man *in his place*' (*takhtav*), that means the four yards (which is the space allowed for downsitting and uprising), and in the same verse it says 'Let no man go out of *his place* (*makom*), this is the two thousand yards.'" The argument intended to be founded on this explanation is, that as Holy Writ, which does not uselessly multiply words, has used here two different words for *place*, this is done because there is a different meaning for each. "But (continues the questioner) how do you learn this?" (viz. that *makom* implies two thousand yards). Rab Chisda says "We have learnt the meaning of *makom* from the use of *makom* elsewhere, and we learn what that [second] *makom* means from *nisah* (=flight, with which word, in one passage, it is connected), and what *nisah* means we have learnt from another *nisah*, and the meaning of the [second] *nisah* we gather from *gebul* (=border, which is found in connection with it in a certain passage), and what *gebul* means we gather from another *gebul*, and what that *gebul* means from *khuts* (=extremity), and what *khuts* means from another *khuts;* for it is written (Numbers xxxv. 5) 'and ye shall measure from the extremity (*mikhuts*) of the city, on the east side, two thousand yards.'"

So taking *khuts* in this last passage as defined, they, by an equation *khuts*=*gebul*=*nisah*=*makom*, defined the second word *place* mentioned in Exod. xvi. 29, as also equal to two thousand yards.

The Scriptural passages on which the above reasoning is based are (1) Exod. xxi. 13, "I will appoint thee a *place* (*makom*) whither *he shall flee*" (*yanus*), and from the verb *yanus* the noun *nisah* is formed; (2) Numb. xxxv. 26, "But if the slayer shall at any time come without the *border* (*gebul*) of the city of his refuge whither *he is fled*," which passage connects *gebul* and *nisah;* and (3) Numb. xxxv. 27, "If the avenger of blood find him *without* (*mikhuts*) the *border* of the city of his refuge," which brings *khuts* into connection with *gebul.*

A traditional development of an interpretation like this must have been received, by him who announces it, from his teacher and must not be his own invention, and in this way a very high antiquity is assured for all such interpretations.

13. *And when they were come in*] i.e. into the city, from the open country where the Ascension had taken place.

they went up into an [the] *upper room*] Probably the upper room which has been mentioned before (Mark xiv. 15; Luke xxii. 12) as used by our Lord and His disciples for the passover feast. The Greek word in the Gospels is not the same as here, but in both cases it is evident that it was some room which could be spared by the occupiers and which was let or lent to the Galilæan band and their followers. The next words indicate the temporary occupancy, and would be better rendered *where they were abiding, namely Peter*, &c. The eleven were the tenants of

both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James.

the upper room, to which the other disciples resorted for conference and communion.

Peter, &c.] The names of the Apostles are again given, though they had been recorded for Theophilus in "the former treatise" (Luke vi. 14—16), perhaps because it seemed fitting that the names of those who are now to be the leaders of the new teaching should be recited at the outset, that each one may be known to have taken his share in the labour, though it will not fall within the plan of the writer to give a notice of their several works; and secondly, as all the twelve had fled before the Crucifixion, this enumeration of them as again at their post, may shew that there had been in all of them, except Judas, only weakness of the flesh, and not unwillingness of the spirit.

It may be noticed that, whereas in the list of Apostles given in St Luke's Gospel the name of Andrew stands second in the first group of four and next after Peter, in this repeated list Andrew is placed fourth. The history gives no reason for this change, but we see in the Gospels, when important events occurred in Christ's ministry, such as the raising of the daughter of Jaïrus, the Transfiguration, and the Agony in Gethsemane, that the three disciples chosen to be present with Jesus are Peter, James and John, but not Andrew. Whatever may have been the reason for such an omission, the fact may in some degree explain the altered position of Andrew's name in the list of the twelve. It appears no more in Holy Writ.

The order of the next group of four differs from their arrangement in the Gospel, but as none of them are mentioned after this verse there is nothing to explain the variation in order. In the next group the A. V. is inconsistent in rendering James *the son* of Alphæus, and afterwards a like construction by Judas *the brother* of James. It is more common to find this dependent genitive in descriptions of a son, though the relationship of brother to brother is found so indicated. Judas is called *the brother* of James here because it is assumed that he is the same person as the author of the Epistle of St Jude, who (Jude 1) calls himself brother of James. But as it is not certain that the writer of that Epistle was one of the twelve, it is better to render the two identical constructions standing so close together in the same way, and so to read *Judas* the son *of James*. James in that case would be the name of some otherwise unknown person, but it was a very common name among the Jews.

Simon Zelotes] called Simon the *Canaanite* (Matt. x. 4; Mark iii. 18). The last-named title is a corruption of an Aramaic word of like meaning with the Greek *Zelotes*, and signifying Zealot, a name applied in our Lord's time to those Jews who were most strict in their observance of the Mosaic ritual. Of this Simon we have no further mention in Scripture history.

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 14

15—26. *Election of an Apostle into the place of Judas Iscariot.*

And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said (the number of names together were 15

14. *These all continued*, &c.] Prayer was the fittest preparation for the gift which they were expecting. The words rendered *and supplication* are omitted in the best MSS.

with the women] Better, *with certain women*. Literally, **with women.** Probably some of those who during the life of Jesus had ministered to Him of their substance and had been at the cross and at His grave (Luke viii. 3, xxiv. 22; Matt. xxvii. 55). The frequent mention of these and other women in the course of Christ's ministry is a noteworthy feature of the Gospel story, and bespeaks more consideration shewn by Him for women than was usual among His nation or with other great teachers.

Mary the mother of Jesus] who would naturally remain with St John, to whose care she had been confided by Jesus at the Crucifixion (John xix. 27). This is the last mention of the Blessed Virgin, and thus Scripture leaves her on her knees. She is mentioned apart from the other women as having a more deep interest in all that concerned Jesus than the rest had.

and with his brethren] These, called (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3) James, Joseph (or Joses), Simon and Judas, are here clearly distinguished from the Apostles, which shews us that James, the son of Alphæus, and James, the Lord's brother, were different persons.

15—26. Election of an Apostle into the place of Judas Iscariot.

15. *And in those days*] i. e. the days intervening between the Ascension and Pentecost.

Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples] The best MSS. read **brethren** for *disciples*. Here we have a formal assembling of all those who were avowed followers of Jesus in Jerusalem, and the rising of Peter to address them bespeaks the importance which he attached to the duty they were about to perform in electing a successor to Judas.

the number, &c.] Render, **and there was a multitude of persons** (Gr. *names*) **gathered together, about a hundred and twenty.** For this use of *names=persons* cp. Rev. iii. 4, "Thou hast a few *names* even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments."

The hundred and twenty here collected is in no way inconsistent with St Paul's statement (1 Cor. xv. 6) that Christ shewed Himself on one occasion, before His Ascension, to more than five hundred brethren at once. Those were gathered from all parts of the land, and we have now mention made only of such as had continued in the Holy City

16 about an hundred *and* twenty), Men *and* brethren, this
scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy
Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning
17 Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For
he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this
18 ministry. (Now this *man* purchased a field with the reward

16. *Men and brethren*] The original is meant for one epithet, and would be fully enough rendered by **brethren** alone, here and in other places where it occurs.

this scripture, &c.] "*This*" is omitted by the best authorities. Read **The** *scripture*, &c. It is to be noticed that Peter can thus speak because he had now been taught to understand the Scriptures (Luke xxiv. 45).

must needs have been fulfilled] Christ was to die on the cross, betrayed to death by one in whom He had trusted. David had spoken in the Psalms of his own afflictions from a similar treachery and also of the destruction which he invoked upon those who were guilty of such infidelity. But while David spake of himself and of his own circumstances, the Holy Ghost through him was speaking of the betrayal of the "Son of David," and the words which had been true of David, must have their still more complete fulfilment in the betrayal of the Saviour, by him "who was guide to them that took Jesus" (Matt. xxvi. 47, &c.).

17. *For he was numbered with* [among] *us, and had obtained part of this ministry*] Literally, **had received the lot of**, &c. Judas fulfils the conditions of the prophecy (Ps. cix. 2—5). His was the mouth of the deceitful, the lying tongue, the groundless enmity, the requital of evil for good. But though numbered among the twelve that was not his true place.

18. It seems best to treat this verse and the following, which break the connexion of St Peter's remarks on David's prophecies, as no part of the Apostle's speech on the election of Matthias. St Luke most likely derived the words from St Peter, from whom he no doubt gathered the facts for this part of his history, and the Apostle would thus at a later time emphasize to St Luke, by a minute description, the ruin which came upon Judas, though in his public address he had only spoken in the words of the Psalmist.

These two verses (18 and 19) are connected in themselves by the copulative conjunction, but the particles which introduce verse 18 (*μὲν οὖν*) express no more than a confirmation of the statement in which they occur, and a transition to some explanatory matter. They are frequently employed in a similar manner by the writer of the Acts (as v. 41, xiii. 4, xvii. 30, xxiii. 22, xxvi. 9). But that which stamps the passage as a parenthesis is the demonstrative pronoun which stands at the head of it. The position of the Greek words would be represented by *This man you are to know* acquired, &c. If it had been a continuous narrative we should have had some connection of the following kind: "He had obtained part of this ministry, and yet he with the reward of his iniquity, &c." without the insertion of any demonstrative, or indeed of any pronoun at all, in the Greek.

Now this man purchased a field] Rather, *acquired*, which probably

of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known 19
unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say,

was the sense intended by the A. V., as it was an old sense of the English word *purchase*. This may be said not only of him who buys, but of him who becomes the occasion of another's buying. The field was bought by the chief priests (Matt. xxvii. 5—8) with the money which Judas returned, but as they could not take that money for the treasury, they were likely to look upon what was purchased with it as still the property of the traitor. St Luke's employment of the unusual word "acquire" in a narrative where he calls the price of the land "the reward of iniquity," and speaks of the immediate death of Judas, makes it clear that he views (and that the people of Jerusalem did the same) the field Akeldama as the field which Judas acquired, though it became, from the circumstances, a public possession for a burial ground.

the reward of iniquity] This expression is only found in N. T. here and 2 Pet. ii. 13, 15. So that it seems to be a Petrine phrase. The A. V. conceals the identity of the Greek words in these three passages by giving them in each place a different English rendering.

and falling headlong, &c.] This can only have occurred after the *hanging* mentioned by St Matthew (xxvii. 5). It appears from St Luke's narrative here that the death of Judas, attended by all these dreadful circumstances, took place in the spot which the chief priests eventually purchased. This, if a fit place for an Eastern burying ground, would be of a rocky character where caves abounded or could easily be made, and it would be the more rugged, if, as St Matthew's narrative intimates, it had been used for the digging of clay for the potters. If in such a place the suicide first hanged himself and the cord which he used gave way, it is easy to understand how in the fall all the consequences described in this verse would be the result. For a similar result to bodies falling on rocks, cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 12. Buxtorf (*Rabb. Lex.* s. v. סבך) suggests that the expression of St Matthew, "hanged himself," might be rendered "he was choked," as if by asphyxia, from over-excitement and anguish. He says the Jews have so explained the end of Ahithophel, and that a like explanation might suit in the Gospel. And St Chrysostom, *Hom.* XXII. *ad Antiochenos*, uses the expression *to be strangled by conscience*. But this view seems to be surrounded by far more difficulties than the belief that St Matthew merely mentioned one single incident in the suicide's fate, while St Luke, because his purpose seemed to ask it, has described the death of Judas in such wise as to shew that his destruction was as terrible as anything of which David had spoken in the Psalms to which St Peter had referred.

19. *And it was known*] Rather, **became** *known*. The fate of Judas, if he died there, and the way in which the purchase money was obtained, caused the name to be changed from "the Potter's Field" to "the Field of Blood," all people recognizing the fitness of the new name.

is called] The use of expressions like this in the present tense shews

20 The field of blood.) For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another

that we are dealing with documents written before the destruction of Jerusalem.

in their proper tongue] i.e. in the language spoken by the Jews in Jerusalem, which was Aramaic. The addition of these words and the explanation of the name *Akeldama* point to this passage as an insertion made by St Luke for the information of Theophilus, who, as his name indicates, was probably of Greek origin, and, it may be, unacquainted with the vernacular speech of Palestine. There could have been no need for St Peter to make such an explanation to the one hundred and twenty who listened to his address. Nor, indeed, is it probable that the name "Field of Blood" became of such common use within the time between the Crucifixion and the election of Matthias, as to make it possible for St Peter to have used the words.

For a similar insertion of a significant name introduced into a compiled narrative before the time at which the name was actually given, cp. 1 Sam. iv. 1, where Eben-ezer is spoken of, though the circumstances in which the name originated are not mentioned till 1 Sam. vii. 12.

20. The passages quoted by St Peter are from Ps. lxix. 25, where it is written "Let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents;" and Ps. cix. 8, "Let his days be few, and let another take his office." St Peter changes the plural of the former verse into the singular in his quotation, for David was speaking of many enemies of his own, yet though Judas was the instrument through which the many enemies of Jesus wrought out their will, it is the punishment which came on the chief offender that St Peter is now desirous to illustrate and point to as a fulfilment of prophecy. The fulfilment in the case of the Jewish nation came at a later date, though their days as a nation were now few, and their destruction, when it came, as terrible as that of Judas.

Let his habitation be] Rather, become, or be made.

and his bishoprick] Now that this word has so restricted a meaning in English it is better to use the more general term office which is given in the margin. In *v.* 25 *this ministry* is used of the same charge, and might be rendered *this diaconate*. A comma placed after the second *and* in this verse will make it clear that there are two quotations from different places. There is no contradiction between the two passages quoted by St Peter, for though the habitation of Judas is to become desolate, and have none dwelling therein, the office which he had been chosen to fill is still to be occupied, and the purpose of God in the choice of the twelve is not to be left incomplete through the offence of the traitor. And it is on the necessity for filling his place that St Peter immediately dwells, saying, For this reason must a new member be chosen. In one passage of the Psalmist the Spirit speaks of the vacancy in the Apostolic office through Iscariot's transgression, in the other of the necessity for filling it up.

take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with 21
us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among
us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto *that same* day 22
that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained *to*
be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed 23
two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and

21. As the new Apostle is to be, like the rest, an eyewitness to the life of Jesus, he must have been a disciple from the beginning of Christ's ministry. Such a necessity would probably make the number from whom choice could be made a very small one. It seems hardly probable, if St Luke's design had been (as is so often asserted) to represent St Paul as in every way like St Peter, that he would have dwelt so strongly on this personal knowledge of Jesus during his ministerial life, as a necessary qualification for the Apostolate.

the Lord Jesus went in and out] This expression, though used in the O. T. to describe some position of leadership in war or otherwise (cp. Deut. xxxi. 2; 1 Sam. xviii. 13), yet is apparently used here only = led his life. So we have it again Acts ix. 28. Cp. also John x. 9.

22. *to be a witness with us of his resurrection*] The Resurrection was the central truth, but to bear testimony that it was truly Jesus who had risen, the witness must have known Him well before His crucifixion.

It is quite in accordance with the character of St Luke's narrative that although he is careful to relate how the number of the Apostles was made complete, and the Church thus furnished with that same number of leaders which Jesus had chosen from the first, yet when Matthias has been chosen, he tells us no word about his special actions. These were no doubt of the same character as those of the eleven, but the writer's purpose is only to give typical instances of the Apostolic labours, and to shew how the Gospel was spread abroad exactly as Christ had foretold.

23. *they appointed two*] Thus exercising their own judgment to a certain degree in the appointment, as they could rightly do from their three years intimacy with those who had been disciples from the beginning.

Joseph called Barsabas [Barsabbas in the best MSS.] *who was surnamed Justus*] From the identity of the names Joseph and Joses (see note on *v.* 14) it has been thought that this Joseph is identical with Joses surnamed Barnabas, mentioned iv. 36. But Barsabbas is apparently a patronymic like Bartimæus, while Barnabas is interpreted as a significant appellation in iv. 36 (see note there), so that there is no sufficient ground for the identification. The name *Justus*, being of Latin origin, was probably used by Joseph in his intercourse with the Gentile inhabitants of the country. Thus Saul takes a Latin name, Paulus, at the commencement of his missionary labours. So Simon had a Greek name, Peter (and may not Christ have given it to him as the name by which he should be known over all the world?), and Thomas was called Didymus. To judge from the mention of Joseph's three names, and from his standing

24 Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which
knowest the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two
25 thou hast chosen, that *he* may take part of this ministry and
apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that *he*
26 might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots;

first in order in the mention of the chosen pair, he was of more account among the Apostles than Matthias. Of his previous or future history we know nothing.

and Matthias] He is said by Eusebius (*H. E.* I. 12. 1) and Epiphanius (I. 20) to have been one of the Seventy, and there was an apocryphal Gospel which passed by his name (Euseb. III. 23).

24. *And they prayed, and said*] Here we are not to conclude that St Luke has recorded any more than the purport of the prayer of the disciples, in the same way as in the speeches which he reports he has only preserved a brief abstract of the speakers' arguments and language.

Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men] By the lot the final decision was left in the hands of God (cf. Prov. xvi. 33), who alone could know which of these two, both having the needful qualifications as far as man could see, would prove the more excellent Apostle. The same expression is applied to God, Acts xv. 8.

shew whether of these two] Literally, **shew of these two the one whom** *thou hast chosen.*

25. *that he may take part*] The best MSS. read *that he may take* **the place,** &c. The *Rec. Text* has the same words here and in *v.* 17, as is represented in the A. V. A scribe remembering the former would easily assimilate the two places, and as the Greek word in *v.* 17 signifies *lot*, he might perceive a fitness in its use in this part of the narrative.

from which Judas by transgression fell] Better, *from which Judas* **fell away.** The Gk. has only a verb which literally = *transgressed.*

that he might go to his own place] He had been chosen into one place by Jesus, but had made another choice for himself, which had ended in destruction. That "his own place" when thus used was, to the Jewish mind, an equivalent for Gehenna = the place of torment, may be seen from the *Baal Haturim* on Numb. xxiv. 25, where it is said "Balaam went *to his own place*, i.e. to Gehenna." A like expression is found concerning Job's friends, *Midrash Rabbah* on Eccl. vii. 1.

26. *And they gave forth their lots*] Better, *And they* **gave lots for them,** in accordance with MSS. The process probably was that each member of the company wrote on a tablet or ticket the name of one of the chosen two; the whole were then placed in some vessel and shaken together, and that tablet which was first drawn out decided the election. The casting of lots, though not now permitted to the Jews (see Shulkhan Aruch *Joreh Deah* par. 179. 1), was used by a provision of the Mosaic Law (Lev. xvi. 8) for the selection of one out of the two goats for the Lord. "The goat upon which the Lord's lot fell" was offered for a sin offering. The Apostles had not yet received the Spirit which was to "guide them into all truth." When the Holy Ghost had been given, they, as St Chrysostom notices (*In Act. Ap. Hom.* III.), used no more casting of lots.

and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1—13. *The Holy Ghost given at Pentecost. Effect first produced thereby on the dwellers at Jerusalem.*

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were 2
all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came
a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it
filled all the house where they were sitting. And there 3
appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it

II. 1—13. THE HOLY GHOST GIVEN AT PENTECOST. EFFECT FIRST PRODUCED THEREBY ON THE DWELLERS AT JERUSALEM.

1. *the day of Pentecost*] The second of the three great Jewish feasts, the Passover being the first, and the third, the feast of Tabernacles. *Pentecost* is the Greek name of the feast, derived from *Pentecostos* = fiftieth; because it was kept on the fiftieth day after the Passover-Sabbath. In the Law it is called "the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours" (Exod. xxiii. 16), and also, from being seven weeks after the Passover, it is named "the feast of weeks" (Exod. xxxiv. 22; Deut. xvi. 9—10). The offering in this festival was the two first loaves made from the first portion of the wheat-harvest of the year, as a thank-offering.

This day was perhaps chosen for the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Apostles, that there might be a greater multitude present in Jerusalem, and so the tidings of this gift might at once be spread abroad. It is perhaps for this reason that the very word employed is one which indicates that the day was *fully* come, and so all that were intending to be present at the feast were there. We find in ix. 2 that there were Christians at Damascus before we read of any one of the Apostolic band visiting that city. It may well be that among those who saw the gifts now bestowed, and whose hearts were pierced by Peter's sermon, there were some who went forth to this and other cities, bearing the fame and teaching of the new society along with them. In like manner, we cannot doubt that it was in order that more might hear His words, that our Lord so frequently went to Jerusalem at the feasts. (John iv. 45, v. 1, vii. 10, x. 22, &c.)

they were all with one accord in one place] The best MSS. have *they were all* together *in one place*. Doubtless in the upper room where the Apostles abode, and where the disciples had met for the election of Matthias.

2. *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind*] Rather, of the rushing of a mighty wind, lit., *of a mighty wind borne along*. The verb employed to express the rushing of the wind is used by St Peter (2 Ep. i. 17, 18) of "the voice which came from heaven" at the Transfiguration, also (i. 21) of the gift of prophecy, and the motion of the prophets by the Holy Ghost.

3. *cloven tongues like as of fire*] Better, *tongues like as of fire* parting

sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude

asunder; cf. Is. v. 24, where the Hebrew has "tongue of fire" while the A. V. gives only "fire." It is also to be noticed that the appearance is not called fire, but only compared unto fire. The idea conveyed by the verb is that the flamelike tongues were distributing themselves throughout the assembly, and the result is expressed by what follows; *and it sat upon each of them.* The intention of the writer is to describe something far more persistent than meteoric light or flashes of electricity. The sound which is heard fills the house, and the flames rest for some time on the heads of the disciples. (See *v.* 33.)

4. This verse describes a great miracle, and its simplicity of statement marks it as the record of one who felt that no additional words could make the matter other than one which passed the human understanding.

they began to speak with other tongues] Spoken of as *new* tongues (Mark xvi. 17). It means languages which they had not known before, and from the history it would appear that some of the company spake in one and some in another language, for the crowd of foreigners, when they come together, all find somebody among the speakers whom they are able to understand.

5. *there were dwelling at Jerusalem*, &c.] Probably, in addition to the visitors, many religious Jews from foreign parts were permanent residents in Jerusalem, for it was to the Jew a thing much to be desired, that he might die and be buried near the Holy City. It is said (T. B. *Kethuboth*, 111 a), "Every one that is buried in the land of Israel is in as good case as if he were buried under the altar," and there are many other like expressions in the immediate context of this quotation. That among the crowd were some residents seems the more likely, because when they recognized the new tongues, some asked as though they were acquainted with the speakers, "Are not these men Galilæans?"

devout men] The adjective is used of the aged Simeon (Luke ii. 25), and of the men who carried Stephen to his burial (Acts viii. 2).

out of every nation under heaven] Hyperbole, as we use *from every part of the world.* So (Josephus, *B. Jud.* II. 16. 4) Herod Agrippa says, "There is not a nation in the world which does not contain some of us" (Jews). Cp. ver. 10, note on *Libya.*

6. *Now when this was noised abroad*] Rather, **And when this sound was heard.** Φωνή though not the same word as is used for *sound* in verse 2, yet is never found in the sense of a *report* or *rumour*, as is given by the A. V. It is used for *crying aloud*, as in the mourning at Rama and Christ's cry on the cross (Matt. ii. 18), or in John the Baptist's preaching (Mark i. 3), and of voices from heaven frequently (Matt. xvii. 5; Mark i. 11; Luke iii. 22; Acts ix. 4, &c.), of the sound of the wind

came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they 7
were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And 8
how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the 9

which is used as a figure for the gift of the Spirit in Christ's conversation with Nicodemus (John iii. 8), and constantly of the heavenly voices in the book of the Revelation (i. 10, v. 2, vi. 6, &c.).

The sound which was sent forth, though heard around in the city, was evidently such as could be traced to a central spot, for to the dwelling of the Apostles, led by the sound, the multitude congregated. It would need but a brief space for a crowd to assemble, and all the new comers found among the disciples, now divinely prepared to be Christ's heralds, some who were declaring what had come to pass, and the great things which God had wrought with them, in the different languages of the lands where the strangers had been born. This was clearly not a proclamation of the wonderful works of God in some one language, which the Spirit, acting upon the hearers, caused them to appreciate as if it were their own, for in that way the gift of the Holy Ghost ought to have been described as poured out, not on the speakers but on the listeners.

7. *Galileans*] No doubt the twelve came more prominently forward than the rest, and in Jerusalem they had been known as Galilæans before the Crucifixion (Matt. xxvi. 69—73).

8. *every man in our own tongue*] i.e. language. There is no description here of any jargon or incoherent speech, we are told of utterances tested by the ears of those who had spoken these languages from their youth. The only question on which from St Luke's description we are left in uncertainty is this: whether the disciples did or did not understand the new words which they were enabled to utter. The only other place in the New Testament which throws any light on this matter is St Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. For a consideration of the expressions which St Paul there employs concerning these marvellous gifts, see note after *v.* 13.

9, 10. Under all the nationalities mentioned in this and the following verse we are to understand the Jews, either by birth or conversion (as is indicated in the case of Rome), whose homes were in the countries named.

Parthians] A people who occupied a wide extent of country south of the Caspian Sea, from which they were separated by Hyrcania. They stretched in the Apostolic times from India to the Tigris, and no doubt stand foremost in this list because of their great fame among the nations of the time.

Medes] Their country lay east of Assyria, north-west of Persia and south and south-west of the Caspian Sea.

Elamites] These dwelt in the district known to the Greeks and Romans as Susiana. It lay at the north of the Persian Gulf and was

dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in
10 Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and
in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome,

bounded on the west by the Tigris, touching Media on the north and Persia on the south and east. They were a Semitic people, perhaps taking their name from Elam, son of Shem (Gen. x. 22). "Shushan in the province of Elam" is mentioned Dan. viii. 2.

Mesopotamia] The country between the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Judea] These would comprise the Jews from the neighbouring towns.

Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia] These were all countries within Asia Minor, Pontus lying in the N. E. and forming, on the north, part of the shore of the Euxine. Cappadocia was south of Pontus, Phrygia was westward of Cappadocia, separated from it by Lycaonia, while Pamphylia stretched on the south coast of Asia Minor between Lycia on the W. and Cilicia on the E. By Asia in this verse, and everywhere else in the Acts, is meant the Roman province known as Proconsular Asia. It comprised all the western coast of Asia Minor and may be roughly considered as embracing the countries known as Mysia, Lydia and Caria. Its capital was Ephesus, and in this district were the seven churches of the Apocalypse.

Egypt] The cities of the north of Egypt, and especially Alexandria, were the abodes of great numbers of Jews.

Libya] was the name anciently applied to the African continent. The parts of it about Cyrene means the district called Cyrenaica. This lay E. of the Syrtis Major and contained five chief cities of which Cyrene was the best known. We find Simon a Cyrenian living in Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 32). Josephus has a passage (*Antiq.* XIV. 7. 2) which testifies to the wide dispersion of the Jews at this time, and also mentions specially Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene as full of them.

"Strabo in another place bears witness to this [the wealth and influence of the Jews]; saying that when Sulla crossed over into Greece to war against Mithridates, he also sent Lucullus to put down *in Cyrene* the revolution raised there by *our nation, of whom the whole world is full.* His words are: There were four classes in the city of the Cyrenians, that of citizens, that of husbandmen, that of resident aliens, and *the fourth of the Jews. Now this last class has already spread into every city, and it is not easy to find a place in the world which has not admitted this tribe, and which is not swayed by them.* And with regard to Egypt and Cyrene as being under the same governors and many portions of other countries, it has come to pass that they imitate them [the Jews], and also give special support to companies of the Jews, and flourish from their adoption of the ancestral laws of the Jews. For instance in Egypt there is a special district set apart for the Jews, and beside this *a large part of the city of Alexandria is apportioned to this race.* And a special magistrate is appointed for them, who governs their nation and administers judgment, and takes charge of their

Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them 11
speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And 12
they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to
another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, *These* 13
men are full of new wine.

contracts[1] and agreements, as if he were the governor of an independent state."

strangers of Rome] Better, **sojourners from Rome both** *Jews &c.* We know from the allusions to them in Latin writers that Jews were numerous in Rome (Hor. *Sat.* I. 5; Juv. X. 14, &c.). It is most probable that converts from among these Romans founded the Church which we know from Acts xxviii. 14, 15 was flourishing there when St Paul first came to that city.

proselytes] Gk. προσήλυτος—*one who has come over;* here, and generally, of converts from heathenism to the religion of the Jews.

11. *Cretes*] Dwellers in the well-known island which lies south of the Cyclades in the Mediterranean, now called *Candia*. Christianity may perhaps have been spread in Crete also from the converts at Pentecost. Titus was made bishop of Crete.

Arabians] Inhabitants of the great peninsula which stretches between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

the wonderful works] More literally, **the great works** of God. So (x. 46) of the first Gentile converts on whom the Holy Ghost came it is said, "They heard them speak with tongues and *magnify God.*" And of those to whom the Spirit was given at Ephesus (xix. 6), "They spake with tongues and *prophesied.*"

12. *they were all amazed, and were in doubt*] Rather, **and were perplexed.** The original means they did not know what to make of what they saw and heard. They had no doubt of the facts, for their ears bore testimony that in their own various mother-tongues the great works of God were being published, and they had just said so.

13. *Others mocking*, &c.] Better, **But** *others mocking said; They are full of new wine.* There is no Greek for the words *these men*, as is shewn by the italics of the A. V.

The sight presented to the bystanders on this occasion was certainly unusual. We cannot but believe that the disciples would be in a fervour of excitement and enthusiasm, and the people who composed the several groups were likely to be no less moved by the account to which they listened in their various languages, coming from the lips of men whom some in the throng recognized for Galilæans, and whose garb and manner would be like that of the ordinary natives of Jerusalem. The excitement exhibited on both sides will account for the remark of the mockers.

[1] This is specially interesting as it corresponds with what was done in our own country. The Jewish contract is called *Shetar*, and such contracts were taken care of by the English authorities in old times, and from their name is derived what we now write *Star*-chamber.

new wine] Lit. *sweet wine*, defined as made of the drippings from the clusters before the grapes were trodden.

In the above description of the events of the day of Pentecost, the meaning which St Luke intends to convey is very plain in every respect, except that we cannot with certainty gather from it whether the disciples, as well as speaking new languages, also understood what they uttered. It would seem most reasonable to conclude that the Holy Spirit with the one power also bestowed the other, and this may have been so in the case of the disciples at Pentecost, even though it was not so at other times and under other circumstances. The only Scripture which bears upon the question is St Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians (xii. 10—xiv. 30). There among the gifts of the Spirit the Apostle enumerates "*divers kinds of tongues*" (xii. 10, 31), and as what might be a separate gift not included in the first, "*the interpretation of tongues*," (xii. 10). He mentions in the next chapter the *tongues of angels* as well as of men (xiii. 1), but not in such an enumeration as to connect the words with our enquiry. It should be borne in mind that all which the Apostle says in the Epistle is addressed to the Corinthians, not as missionary labourers but as members of a settled Christian Church, and he is instructing them what the best gifts are after which they should seek. Now their labours and utterances were to be among their own people and mostly among those already professing Christianity. St Paul repeatedly dwells on "the church" as the scene of their labours, which expression without necessarily always implying an edifice (which however here seems to be its meaning, see xiv. 23, 27) indicates a Christian community. The Apostle tells them that gifts of tongues are not for these. Tongues are for a sign not to them that believe but to the unbelieving. To speak with tongues was therefore not the best gift to be desired for the Church at Corinth. Yet we can fancy that some members longed for such a power, and it is to such as these that the Apostle's remarks are directed. In such a congregation as theirs, he tells them, "he that speaketh in a tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God" (xiv. 2), meaning to teach them that if a man had this gift he would yet profit his neighbours nothing, for they would not be men of a foreign speech like the crowd at Pentecost, or like those in foreign lands which the Christian missionaries must visit. Next he adds "he that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself" (xiv. 4), for he feels the power and tells of the great works of God. The Apostle could wish "they all spake with tongues," if, that is, there were an advantage to the Church therein, but under their circumstances he rather wishes the gift of prophecy, i.e. power of exposition of the Scriptures and preaching, for them. We next come to those sentences which bear directly upon our enquiry (xiv. 13), "Let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret." There were then in the Corinthian Church examples of that division of these closely connected gifts which in the enumeration of spiritual gifts the Apostle seems to imply, some spake with tongues who could not interpret, and others could interpret who did not speak with tongues. And the next words confirm this view, "If I pray in a tongue my spirit prayeth," (and in this way I edify myself,) "but my understanding is unfruitful." Therefore the Apostle desires that form of

14—21. *St Peter's Sermon. Refutation of the Mockers.*

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lift up his voice, 14
and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all *ye* that dwell

power for himself which in a congregation shall exercise both spirit and understanding. He himself had this gift in great fulness, but in the Church it is not that which he would desire to use, lest the unlearned should not be able to say Amen to his giving of thanks. For in the ordinary church-assembly if the gift of tongues were exercised, it would seem madness to those Corinthian unbelievers who came in, when they heard a speaker uttering a foreign language to a congregation who were all Greeks, and their minister a Greek likewise. St Paul therefore ordains that if any man speak in a tongue in the Church, he must have an interpreter or else must keep silence. From which ordinance also it appears that there were those who, though endowed with the gift of speaking with tongues, were yet not able to interpret to the congregation the words which they were empowered to speak.

In these passages we have all the references to this gift of the Holy Ghost which seem to help us to appreciate in some degree what its character was. Whatever may have been the case at Pentecost, certainly in the Corinthian Church the power of speaking seems not always to have had with it the power of interpretation, though in some cases it had, and all were to pray for the one to be given with the other. Yet in this whole account it is to be borne in mind that we have no indication that such gifts were frequent in Corinth, but only that the members of the Church longed to possess them. From this wish the Apostle dissuades them, because their duty was to minister to believers rather than to unbelievers, whereas on those occasions where the gift was most markedly bestowed, as related by the author of the Acts, viz. at the house of Cornelius, and in the heathen and multilingual maritime city of Ephesus, as well as at the outpouring on Pentecost, there was the probability of having an audience on whom such a display of God's gifts would be likely to produce the same kind of effect which had been produced in Jerusalem on the first manifestation.

14—21. St Peter's Sermon. Refutation of the Mockers.

14. *But Peter, standing up,* &c.] The twelve naturally take the leading place among the disciples, and Peter, who had been spokesman before, begins the general address now, directing it principally to those who were dwellers in Jerusalem and the neighbouring country, for it was more likely to be these who gave vent to the mocking speeches than the foreigners who would better recognize the astounding nature of what had come to pass.

and said unto them] Better, **and spake forth unto them**. The original word is the same as that used to describe the gift which they had just received. "They spake as the Spirit gave them *utterance*," lit. to speak forth (ii. 4). St Paul employs it when Festus had said he was mad. "I *speak forth* the words of truth and soberness" (xxvi. 25).

at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my
15 words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing
16 it is *but* the third hour of the day. But this is that which
17 was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to
pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of
my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your
daughters shall prophesy, and your young men
shall see visions, and your old men shall dream
18 dreams: and on my servants and on my hand-

and hearken] The word is only found here in the N.T. It signifies to take anything into the ears.

15. *are not drunken*] Wine was drunk by the Jews with flesh only, and, founding the custom on Exodus xvi. 8, they ate bread in the morning, and flesh in the evening, and so took no wine till late in the day. So Eccles. x. 16, 17, by the "princes who eat *in the morning*" are meant those who eat to the full of all sorts of food and so take wine, and their opposites are next described as those who eat in due season for strength and not for *drunkenness*.

The paraphrase of this passage given in the Targum is worth notice in illustration of the text of the Acts. It reads, "Woe to thee, O land of Israel, when there shall reign over thee Jeroboam the wicked, and shall exterminate from the midst of thee the offering of the morning sacrifice, and when thy lords shall eat bread before any man has offered the perpetual offering of the morning. Blessed art thou, land of Israel, at the time when Hezekiah the son of Ahaz (who is of the genealogy of the house of David) shall reign, who will be a mighty hero in the law, and fulfil all the duties of the commandments, and then thy princes shall only eat bread after the perpetual offering has been offered (i.e. their eating shall be) at the fourth hour, from the labour of their hands in the strength of the law, and not in faintness and blindness of the eyes."

third hour of the day] Only one quarter of the day was yet over. The Jews divided the day and night each into twelve parts, which they called hours but which varied in length as the daylight was less or more. When the day was as long as the night the third hour would be nine o'clock in the morning.

16. *by* (or through) *the prophet Joel*] Joel calls his prophecy "the word of the Lord that came unto Joel." The passage is from Joel ii. 28—32. The order of the clauses differs slightly from the Hebrew order, shewn in the A.V., but agrees generally with the LXX.

17. *in the last days*] These words are an interpretation of the *afterwards* of the Hebrew, and *after these things* of the LXX. The expression "the last days" is used in the Old Testament to signify the coming of the Messiah. (Cp. Isa. ii. 2; Micah iv. 1.) The latter clauses of this verse are transposed in Joel.

18. *and on my servants*, &c.] The conjunctions of the original demand a stronger rendering. Yea and, &c.

maidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will shew wonders 19
in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath;
blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the 20
sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon
into blood, before *that* great and notable day of
the Lord come: and it shall come to pass, *that* 21
whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord
shall be saved.

22—36. *Recital of God's witness by the Resurrection to the Messiahship of Jesus.*

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Na- 22
zareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles

and they shall prophesy] See xix. 6, where this is the result of the gift of the Spirit; cf. also Agabus (xi. 28), and the daughters of Philip the Evangelist (xxi. 9).

19. *and I will shew wonders*, &c.] By the figurative language of this verse the prophet teaches that even when the kingdom of Christ shall have come into the world, mighty troubles shall still prevail. Cp. Christ's own words of like import (Matt. xxiv. 21—30).

20. *that great and notable day*] Instead of *notable* we have in Joel *terrible*. The words of the N. T. are those of the LXX. The Hebrew verbs *to fear* and *to see* have often been confounded in that version. On the various senses of this expression cp. Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr.* Mark ix. 1. The prophecy of Joel was primarily and partially fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, but also looked onward to its destruction by the Romans.

21. *shall be saved*] Eusebius (*H. E.* III. 5. 3) tells how the Christians were warned to leave Jerusalem before the destruction, and went into a city of Perea called Pella.

22—36. Recital of God's witness by the Resurrection to the Messiahship of Jesus.

22. *men of Israel*] As the prophecies which St Peter is about to put forward were given before the nation was rent into two parts, he calls them by a name which points to their union and common descent from Jacob.

Jesus of Nazareth, a man, &c.] He begins with the manhood of Jesus as that which they would all confess.

approved] i. e. publicly demonstrated or set forth. Cp. the words of Nicodemus (John iii. 2), "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him."

among you] Better, **unto you**; for the testimony had been given not only *among* them, but presented *unto* them, cf. John xii. 37,

and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the
23 midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being
delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge
of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified
24 and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the
pains of death: because it was not possible that he should
25 be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I
foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is
on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
26 therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was
glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:
27 because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nei-

"Though he had done so many miracles *before them* yet they believed not on him."

by miracles and wonders and signs] These distinct names are given to Christ's marvellous works according to the light in which they are viewed. The first name, *miracles*, lit. **powers**, is applied to them because they proclaimed the might of Him who wrought them; they are named *wonders*, because they called forth that feeling when they were wrought; and *signs* because they point out their author as Divine.

God did] St Peter does not yet advance to the declaration of Christ as God, only as God's agent, in works which their own eyes had seen.

23. *him, being delivered*, &c.] i.e. given up unto you, as God had decreed for the sake of man's redemption.

ye have taken, and by wicked hands, &c.] The best MSS. omit the word rendered *have taken*. Read, *ye by the hand of wicked men have crucified and slain. By the hand of* is a Hebrew formula for *by means of*. Cp. Lev. viii. 36, "things which the Lord commanded *by the hand of* Moses." So 2 Kings xiv. 25, &c.

wicked] Lit. *lawless*.

25. *For David speaketh concerning him*] The passage which St Peter quotes is from Ps. xvi. 8—11, and he argues that it could not be of himself that the Psalmist there spake, for they had evidence that the words could not be truly said of him; but that having regard to God's promise he spake of Him who was to be born from his line, as identified with himself. St Peter's quotation is from the LXX.

I foresaw] The Hebrew has, *I set*. *Foresaw* is here used as = saw.

26. *my tongue was glad*] The Heb. has *my glory*. Cp. Ps. cviii. 1, where the A. V. has, according to the Hebrew, "I will give praise even *with my glory*," while the Prayer-book Version renders "*with the best member that I have*."

shall rest] Lit. *shall tabernacle*.

27. *in hell*] The Greek word here and in *v.* 31 is *Hades*, and signifies *the unseen world*.

ther wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways 28
of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy
countenance. Men *and* brethren, let *me* freely speak unto 29
you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried,
and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being 30
a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath
to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh,
he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing 31
this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul
was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

neither wilt thou suffer] Lit. *give*.

thine Holy One] The Hebrew word in the Psalm contains the idea of *beloved*, as well as *godly* or *holy*. Our A. V. represents the Greek.

28. *thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance*] Thus the LXX. paraphrases the Hebrew, which gives "in thy presence is fulness of joy."

29. Here the Apostle begins his argument from the words of David, and at the outset speaks to his hearers as *brethren*.

Men and brethren] See on i. 16.

let me freely speak] Better (with the margin), I may *freely* say *unto you of the patriarch David that he* both died and was buried, i.e. none of you will contradict such a statement. As St Paul using the same argument (xiii. 36), "David after he had served his own generation fell on sleep and was laid unto his fathers."

and his sepulchre is with us] thus shewing that after death he did not rise again. The sepulchre of the House of David was a famous object in the Holy City. Among the marvels of Jerusalem mentioned in the *Aboth de-Rabbi Nathan* (c. 35), we are told, "There are no graves made in Jerusalem except the tombs of the house of David and of Huldah the Prophetess, which have been there from the days of the first prophets."

On the burial of David in Zion, cp. 1 Kings ii. 10 with 2 Sam. v. 7.

30. *knowing that God had sworn with an oath*] See Ps. cxxxii. 11, "of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne] The words represented by "according .....Christ" are omitted in the best MSS. The clause as corrected by them would be "of the fruit of his loins *one* should sit [or he would set *one*] on his throne."

31. *spake of the resurrection of Christ*] Better, of the resurrection of the Christ, i.e. the Messiah, the anointed of Jehovah.

that his soul was not left in hell, &c.] The words for *his soul* are not found in the best MSS. Read, that neither was he left in hell nor did his flesh, &c. This is an example of a kind of variation from the earliest MSS. which is very common and can be most easily understood

32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.
33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.
34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on
35 my right hand, until I make thy foes thy foot-

and explained. On the margin of some early copy the words for *his soul* were written as an explanation of the shorter expression used in this verse by the more full language of the Psalm in ver. 27, and by some later scribe the words were brought into the text.

32. *This Jesus hath God raised up*] (i.e. from the dead). The verb here, and the noun translated *resurrection* in the previous verse, are parts of the same word, and make the statement very forcible in the Greek. David spake of a *resurrection*, which manifestly was not his own, but here is now come to pass the *resurrection* of Jesus, of which we all are witnesses. The *all* is probably to be confined to Peter and the eleven, with whom he is more closely connected in this speech (see *v.* 14) than with the rest.

33. *Therefore being by* [or *at*] *the right hand of God exalted*] i.e. into heaven. For not only are the Apostles and disciples witnesses of the Resurrection but also of the Ascension.

the promise of the Holy Ghost] called *the promise of the Father* in i. 4. Christ had told His disciples that the Father would send this gift upon them in answer to His prayer. "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter.....he shall teach you all things" (John xiv. 16, 26).

he hath shed forth] Better, **he hath poured forth**. Thus the fulfilment of the prophecy is, as in the original, described by the same word which is put into the mouth of the prophet in *v.* 17.

see and hear] It would seem from this that the appearance, like as of fire, which rested upon each of them, remained visible for some time, thus making it apparent how different this was from any meteoric flashes into which some have endeavoured to explain away the miracle which St Luke describes.

34. *For David is not ascended*] Better *ascended not*. He went down to the grave, and "slept with his fathers."

but he saith himself] in Ps. cx. 1. Speaking as a prophet, and of the same person, whom, though he was to be born of the fruit of his loins, he yet in the Spirit called his Lord. The words of this Psalm the Jews in the discourse with our Lord (Matt. xxii. 44, 45) admit to be spoken of the Christ.

The LORD [Jehovah] *said unto* [him whom I must even now call] *my Lord*] as by prophetic insight I foresee how great he shall be.

Sit thou on my right hand] i.e. be thou a sharer of my throne and power. This is a common Eastern expression. Cp. the request of the mother of James and John when she desired places of influence for her

stool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, 36
that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

37—40. *Effect of St Peter's Sermon.*

Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in *their* 37
heart, and said unto Peter and *to* the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said 38
unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you

sons in what she supposed would be a temporal kingdom (Matt. xx. 21).

35. *until I make thy foes thy footstool*] To put the foot on the neck of an enemy is an expression for complete victory. This was an Oriental custom (cp. Josh. x. 24). Christ's enemies are to become His footstool, but His power shall not end then. When they are all subdued His kingdom shall continue and be more glorious.

36. *let all the house of Israel know*] Of course such an appeal can only be made to Israel, for they only had known the prophecies, and received the promises.

that God hath made, &c.] The Greek has more force than the A. V. gives. Render, **God hath made him both Lord and Christ, even this Jesus whom ye crucified.** This is the close of the reasoning. Jesus, who had been crucified, God has raised from the grave, God has exalted to heaven and set Him on His own right hand, and thus shewn that He is the Lord and the Anointed One.

37—40. Effect of St Peter's Sermon.

37. *pricked in their heart*] stung with remorse at the enormity of the wickedness which had been committed in the Crucifixion, and at the blindness with which the whole nation had closed their eyes to the teaching of the prophecies which had spoken of the Messiah.

unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles] As specially the witnesses of the Resurrection and Ascension, and being the recognized heads of the new society.

Men and brethren] See i. 16, note.

what shall we do?] To escape the penalties which must fall on the nation that has so sinned against light and knowledge; who have had the true Light in their midst, but have comprehended it not, and have crucified the Lord of glory.

38. *Repent*] This was in accordance with the directions of Jesus before His ascension (Luke xxiv. 47), "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name."

be baptized] Also enjoined by Christ (Matt. xxviii. 19), and while there the baptism is "to be in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," and here it is only said "in the name of Jesus Christ," we are not to suppose any change made from the first ordinance, but only that as the Church was to be called Christ's, so in

in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and
39 ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are
40 afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41—47. *The first Converts and their behaviour.*

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:

mentioning the Sacrament for the admission of its members His name was specially made prominent. It was belief in Christ as the Son of God which constituted the ground of admission to the privileges of His Church. This made the whole of St Peter's creed (Matt. xvi. 16) when Christ pronounced him blessed.

ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost] This is expressly stated to have been given to some of the converts (see viii. 17, x. 47, &c.), and we cannot doubt that it was largely bestowed on these earlier penitents.

39. *the promise is unto you, and to your children*] Just as "to Abraham *and his seed* were the promises made" (Gal. iii. 16), so is it to be under the new covenant.

all that are afar off] Peter knew from the first, we see, that the Gentiles were to be admitted to the same privileges as Israel. But Christ's commission said they were to preach *first* in Jerusalem and in Judæa. Peter needed the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven to tell him *when* God's time was come for the extension of the work; and though in his dream the natural prejudice of his race was asserted, yet when he awoke he went "without gainsaying as soon as he was sent for" (x. 29), as he says to Cornelius. For Christ's words had been "Go, teach *all nations*."

shall call] Better, **shall call unto him**. The verb is a compound, not the simple verb.

40. *And with many other words did he testify*, &c.] Hence we learn that there is no attempt made by the writer of the Acts to produce more than the substance and character of what was here said. And we may be sure that he uses the same rule always, and we need not therefore be startled if we find an address followed by mighty results, even though St Luke's abstract of it may only extend over a few verses.

testify] The same word is translated *charge* in 1 Tim. v. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 14, iv. 1, and would be well rendered here by the same word. Here the address of Peter was not a bearing witness, but a direction what they were to do.

untoward generation] Lit. *crooked*. The word is so translated Phil. ii. 15 and might be here. The words "crooked generation" are not strange to the A. V. (Deut. xxxii. 5), and the figure is made stronger by the literal rendering.

41—47. THE FIRST CONVERTS AND THEIR BEHAVIOUR.

41. *Then they that gladly received his word*] The oldest MSS. omit

and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apo- 42
stles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many 43
wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that 44
believed were together, and had all *things* common; and 45
sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all

gladly. The latter clause of the verse is more literally, *And there were added on that day about three thousand souls*, i.e. to the one hundred and twenty of whom the Church consisted when the day began.

42. *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine*] i.e. They allowed nothing to interfere with the further teaching which the Apostles no doubt gave to the newly baptized. The converts would naturally seek to hear all the particulars of the life of Him whom they had accepted as Lord and Christ, and such narratives would form the greatest part of the teaching of the Apostles at the first.

and fellowship] That communion, or holding all things common, of which a more full description is given in the following verses, and which would bind them most closely into one society.

breaking of bread] The earliest title of the Holy Communion and that by which it is mostly spoken of in Scripture. (See Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 16, &c.) In consequence of the omission here and elsewhere of any mention of the wine, an argument has been drawn for communion in one kind. But it is clear from the way in which St Paul speaks of the bread and the cup in the same breath, as it were, that such a putting asunder of the two parts of the Sacrament which Christ united is unwarranted by the practice of the Church of the Apostles.

and in prayers] The Greek has the article here, and stress has sometimes been laid on this, as though the Church at this early date had some settled form of prayer. But it is enough to refer to i. 14, where the article is also found, but which few would wish to construe "they continued stedfastly in *the* prayer."

43. *And fear came upon every soul*] The mockers were silenced by what they saw and heard, and were deterred from further opposition even though they did not listen to the call to repentance.

wonders and signs] See *v.* 22.

44. *were together, and had all things common*] With the words of the angels still in their ears (i. 11), "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," the disciples were no doubt full of the thought that the return of Jesus was not far distant. Such an opinion spreading among the new disciples would make them ready to resign their worldly goods, and to devote all things to the use of their brethren. For so the spreading of a knowledge of Christ could be made the chief work of the whole body of believers.

45. *And sold their possessions*, &c.] For the money which resulted from such sales would be the most convenient form in which their bounty could be bestowed on those who needed it.

46 *men*, as every *man* had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat *their* meat with gladness and single-
47 ness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

as every man had need] Better, **according as any man had need**. We gather from this that the first converts kept their homes and things needful for themselves, but held the rest as a trust for the Church to be bestowed whenever need was seen. This is an earlier stage than that in which the money was brought and put at the disposal of the Apostles.

46. *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple*] The Greek is more emphatic. Render, **And day by day attending continually** with one accord, &c.

At the Temple they were likely to meet with the greatest number of devout listeners; and we shall find that the first Christians did not cease to be religious Jews, but held to all the observances of their ancient faith, its feasts, its ritual, and its hours of prayer, as far as they could do so consistently with their allegiance to Jesus. We find (xxi. 20—24) the elders of the Church in Jerusalem urgent on St Paul that he should shew his zeal for the Law by taking upon him the vow of a Nazarite, and should so quiet the scruples of Jews, and of such Christian brethren as were more zealous for the Law than St Paul himself.

and breaking bread from house to house] Perhaps better, *breaking bread* **at home**; though the A. V., if rightly understood, gives the sense very well. What is meant is, that the specially Christian institution of the breaking of bread was not a part of the service in the Temple, but was observed at their own homes, the congregations meeting now at one house now at another. The connection of the Lord's Supper with the Passover meal at its institution, made the Christian Sacrament essentially a service which could be celebrated, as at the first institution it was, in such a room as that where the Passover meal was eaten.

did eat their meat] i. e. took their food, their ordinary meals.

with gladness, &c.] because those who were able to contribute to the support of the poorer members of the Church were delighted to do so, and thus all over-anxious care for the morrow was removed from the whole community.

singleness of heart] Having but one end in view, that the faith of Christ should be spread abroad as widely as possible.

47. *praising God*] because their hearts were full of thankfulness for the knowledge of Jesus as His Christ.

having favour with all the people] As it was said of Christ, "the common people heard Him gladly" (Mark xii. 37), so it seems to have been with His Apostles. The first attack made on them is (iv. 1) by the priests, the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees.

And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved] The oldest MSS. agree in omitting *to the church*, and the literal rendering of

1—10. *Healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple.*

3 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at
a the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth *hour*. And a certain
man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they

the most authoritative text is, **And the Lord added day by day together such as were in the way of salvation**, i.e. brought into the communion "such as" (literally) "were being saved," the work of whose salvation was begun but needed perseverance; who had set foot on the way and were heirs through hope of ultimate salvation. By this rendering the Greek words ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό = to the same place, together, which in the Rec. Text are at the beginning of chapter iii., are taken into this verse in accordance with the authority of the oldest MSS.

III. 1—10. HEALING OF THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

1. *Now Peter and John went up together*] The word *together* has been transferred to the previous verse. See the last note. The verb is in the imperfect tense, and would be more correctly rendered **were going up**. The Temple stood above the city on Mount Moriah.

into the temple] While earnestly labouring for the spread of Christ's teaching, they did not cast off regard for that schoolmaster which had been appointed to bring men to Christ.

at the hour of prayer] The preposition indicates the period of time towards which their movement tended, and may be well rendered *for the hour*, &c. They were on their way, and would get there at the time appointed for prayer.

We read in Scripture of three specified hours of prayer, in accordance with which the Psalmist speaks of his own custom (Ps. lv. 17), "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray." And in like manner Daniel prayed "three times a day" (Dan. vi. 10). The hour of morning prayer was the third hour, and Peter went up to the housetop to pray (Acts x. 9) about the sixth hour, which was noon, and the evening prayer was this to which Peter and John were going up.

being the ninth hour] At the Equinox this would be three o'clock in the afternoon, but when the daylight was longer it would be later, so that if there were 18 hours day and 6 hours of darkness, each hour of the day would be an hour and a half long, and the hours of the night only half an hour each. At such time the ninth hour would be at half-past four.

2. *And a certain man lame from his mother's womb*] There is the verb expressed in the original, and it should be translated *a certain man* **who was**, &c.

was carried] i.e. regularly every day, and the position in which he had been daily set for the greater part of his forty years' life (see iv. 22) made it certain that he would be widely and well known. So Bartimæus sat by the wayside to beg (Mark x. 46).

laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beau-
3 tiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who
seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked
4 an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with
5 John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them,
6 expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said,
Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I
thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and
7 walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lift *him* up:
and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength,

whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful] The gateways of the Temple gave admission to the inner court from the court of the Gentiles and the court of the women; there were three on the north and the same number on the south, but the Beautiful Gate meant in this verse was probably the gate on the east which led from the court of the women. The other gates, Josephus says (*B. J.* v. 5. 3), were overlaid with gold and silver, but this one was "made of Corinthian bronze, and much surpassed in worth those enriched with silver and gold."

3. *asked an alms*] *Alms* is singular number, and was in early times spelt *almesse*, which is derived from the Greek ἐλεημοσύνη, which in German becomes *Almosen*=a gift of charity.

4. *And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him*, &c.] And doubtless, like Paul at Lystra (xiv. 9), "perceiving that he had faith to be healed." For the man's first act after his cure—"he entered into the temple" (*v.* 8)—may be taken as an indication of his devout frame of mind.

6. *Silver and gold have I none*] The Apostles, we may see from this, made no claim for themselves upon the contributions of the richer converts.

but such as I have give I thee] Better literally, **what I have that give I thee.** We are nowhere told how much time had passed since the day of Pentecost, and it is probable that this was not the first miracle which Peter wrought (see ii. 43). For he speaks as not without experience of what works God will enable him to do. His language is that of firm assurance, "what I have," though in a moment he adds "In the name of Jesus Christ."

Jesus Christ of Nazareth] According to St John's account, the name Nazareth was included in the title on Christ's cross (John xix. 19), and we can see that the place was despised in the eyes of the Jews (John i. 46) from Nathanael's question to Philip. This despised origin, as well as the shameful death of Jesus, was a stumbling-block to the Jews.

rise up and walk] The best MSS. have only the last verb *walk*. So that the arguments which have been based on these words to shew that St Luke in the Acts has drawn his picture here from what is recorded of Christ's language (Luke v. 23) in the Gospel, fall to the ground.

7. *his feet and ankle bones*] The words in the original are found nowhere else in the N. T. They are of a technical character, and their

and he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with 8
them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising
God. And all the people saw him walking and praising 9
God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms 10

use, together with the other features of exact description of the cripple's case, indicate that we have before us the language of the physician (Col. iv. 14). And it is hardly possible to dwell too strongly on indications of this kind, which indirectly mark in the history something which is likewise noted in the Epistles. Those who would assign the second century as the date of the composition of the Acts, must assume for their supposed writer the keenest appreciation of every slight allusion in the letters of St Paul, and at the same time an ability to let his knowledge peep out only in hints like that which we find in this verse. Such persons, while rejecting all that is miraculous in the story as we have it, ask us to believe in such a writer as would himself be almost a miracle, for his powers of observation and the skill with which he has employed them.

received strength] Though from want of use, they must have been withered before.

8. *and he leaping up stood*] There is no hesitation in the man's manner; he does not question the power, but obeys at once.

entered with them into the temple] He doubtless felt that this was the best visit he could make with his new powers, and he would be the more anxious to go there as Peter and John were going too.

leaping] For delight at his new strength he cannot put it too much in exercise. This exultant use of the gift was a part of his "praising God."

We can hardly fail to see, if we compare the narrative of this miracle with that of the similar one wrought at Lystra by St Paul (xiv.), to which we have already referred, that St Luke has used faithfully the materials with which he was furnished by "eye-witnesses," and has given the accounts as he received them without any colouring of his own. In this chapter we have a description such as a painter would desire; the scene is brought vividly before us, and all the characters are in lively action. It is just such an account as we find in St Mark's Gospel of the cure of the demoniac child (Mark ix. 14—27), and both are quite in accord with all that we know of St Peter's mode of speaking, and from St Peter it is most probable that the narrative in this chapter is derived. On the contrary, the story of the cure wrought at Lystra by St Paul is told in the fewest possible words and with no touch of the graphic power of which this description is so full. The difference bespeaks the faithfulness of the writer of the Acts, and shews us that he has left the narratives as they came to his hand, without any attempt to stamp on them an individuality of his own.

9. *all the people saw him*] There was abundance of testimony to the reality of the cure, and that by many persons who had seen the cripple for years. This the Jewish authorities (iv. 16) admit.

10. *and they knew that it was he*, &c.] The same verb is rendered

at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

11—26. *St Peter's discourse to the crowd.*

11 And as the lame *man* which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch
12 that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye *so* earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made
13 this *man* to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac,

(iv. 13) *they took knowledge*, and that sense is perhaps the better here. It can hardly have been intended to say that the whole of the people knew the man.

11—26. ST PETER'S DISCOURSE TO THE CROWD.

11. *And as the lame man which was healed held Peter*, &c.] The oldest MSS. give *And as he held Peter*, &c. The additional words have crept in from some marginal note of explanation.

the porch that is called Solomon's] As the name of Solomon was so intimately connected with the Jewish Temple, it is natural enough that one of its porches (or cloisters) should be called after him. There is no account of any such porch in Solomon's own Temple, but Josephus tells us (*Ant.* XX. 9. 7) that there was an eastern porch in Herod's Temple called by this name. The mention of this feature in the building is a sign that the writer, from whom St Luke drew, was one acquainted with the localities about which he speaks, and that the account was written before the fall of Jerusalem, or he would not have said *is called*, or if he had done so would have been convicted of inconsistency of language by those to whom his work was first presented.

12. *when Peter saw it*] i.e. their wonder, as may be inferred from his opening words.

he answered] Often used although no previous remark or question precedes. Cp. Acts v. 8, where Peter is said to have *answered* Sapphira, though she had said nothing, as far as we are told, and where the Apostle's words are a *question*.

why marvel ye at this?] Probably we should supply *man*, because the pronoun at the close of the verse is only the personal and not the demonstrative, and we should read "made *him* to walk," and not as the A. V. "made *this man* to walk."

look ye so earnestly] The verb is rendered "to fasten the eyes on" in *v.* 4.

by our own power] As he had done to the cripple, so also he makes it clear to the crowd that the name of Jesus is the power by which he has wrought.

and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go. But ye 14
denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom 15
God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this 16
man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is

13. *hath glorified his Son Jesus*] The Greek is not *υἱὸν* but *παῖδα*, and should be rendered **Servant**, and this would carry the mind back, as St Peter no doubt intended, to Isaiah xlii. 1, "Behold my *servant* whom I uphold," a passage which St Matthew (xii. 18) applies to Jesus.

denied him in the presence of Pilate] alluding to Pilate's question (John xix. 15), "Shall I crucify your king?" to which they answered, "We have no king but Cæsar."

when he was determined, &c.] Rather, **when he had given sentence to release him**. For Pilate had pronounced Jesus innocent (John xix. 4).

14. *But ye denied the Holy One and the Just*] Whom even the demoniac (Mark i. 24) had confessed to be "the Holy One of God."

desired a murderer] Barabbas, who had committed murder, Mark xv. 7; Luke xxiii. 19.

15. *the Prince of life*] The same word applied to Jesus (Heb. xii. 2) is rendered "*author* and finisher of our faith," and in the same epistle (ii. 10) "the *captain* of their salvation." It is probably in the latter sense that St Peter, whose thoughts are on the Resurrection, uses the word here, thinking of Christ as the firstfruits of them that slept (1 Cor. xv. 20), but the other sense, that "in him was life" (John i. 4), is also embraced in the word.

whom God hath raised] Better, *whom God* **raised**, i. e. once for all.

whereof we are witnesses] The relative is here better referred to Christ, "*of whom* we are witnesses." Not merely did they bear witness of the Resurrection, though that was a most important portion of their testimony, but of all Christ's teaching and deeds. Cp. i. 22, where Matthias was chosen to be such a witness.

16. *And his name*, &c.] There is more force in retaining the order of the Greek, **And through faith in his name, his name hath made strong this man whom ye see and know.** This use of *name* = power, and even as an absolute equivalent for God, is very Jewish; cp. iv. 12. The usage grew out of such passages as Ps. cvi. 8, "He saved them for *His name's* sake." In the literature of the Jews great power was attributed to the name of God even when only inscribed, e.g. as it was said in tradition to have been on the rod of Moses. By this power he is reported to have wrought the miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness. But St Peter's language here explains that it is no such power of which he is now speaking, for the name of Jesus does not work the miracle *per se* but only because of the faith of the believer.

the faith which is by him] St Peter uses the like expression (1 Pet.

by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the pre-
17 sence of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through
18 ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. But *those things*, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.
19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when *the* times of refreshing shall come from

i. 21), "You who by Him do believe in God." Christ is "the *author and finisher* of our faith."

17. *I wot*] This antiquated word is the present tense of the verb *to wit* (A. S. *witan*) = to know, and its past tense is *I wist*. Had I wist = had I known.

through ignorance] Ignorance has many degrees and can arise from many causes. The Jewish multitude were ignorant from want of teaching, their rulers from mental perverseness in looking only on one part of the prophecies concerning the Messiah. Yet of both these it may be said that through ignorance (i.e. want of knowledge, however caused,) they crucified Jesus.

18. *by the mouth of all his prophets*, &c.] The best MSS. connect the pronoun *his* with the next clause. Read, **by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer**. The purpose of the whole of the Scripture is to set forth the redemption of men through the suffering of Christ. So that from the first mention of the bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman (Gen. iii. 15), there had been a constant chain of testimony that the Christ should suffer.

he hath so fulfilled] Turning your evil deed to a purpose of salvation.

19. *Repent ye therefore*] i.e. because you see the greatness of your offence.

and be converted] Lit. *turn again*, i.e. from the evil of your ways. The word *convert* has received much ongrowth of meaning since the A. V. was made. The same word is well rendered (xi. 21), "a great number believed and *turned* unto the Lord."

when the times of refreshing shall come] ὅπως ἂν cannot be translated *when* the times...*shall come*, but *that* the times...*may come*. These particles indicate a purpose, the accomplishment of which still lies in doubt. So the Apostle's argument is, Repent, that your sins may be blotted out, *that in this way* (i.e. by your penitence) the times of refreshing *may* come. The particles are rendered in this sense Acts xv. 17, "that the residue of men might [better *may*] seek after the Lord."

times of refreshing] The Greek word signifies "appointed times," i.e. which God hath appointed and which He keeps in His own power, but which the penitence of men will hasten. They are called "times of refreshing," i.e. peace and blessedness, for the Apostle describes them afterwards as the coming of the Christ. But by the prophecies which he quotes he shews that the refreshing is for those only who repent (*v.* 23) and hear the prophet whom God sends. The anticipation of

the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, 20
which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven 21
must receive until the times of restitution of all *things*, which
God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets
since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the 22

a speedy return of Christ from heaven was common among the first believers. St Peter here does not directly state this opinion, but we can see how current it was from St Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians, where he finds it necessary to warn the Christians of that Church against the disquiet which the immediate expectation of the second Advent was causing among them.

20. *and he shall send*] The construction is continued from the previous verse. Read, **and that he may send.**

In the rest of this verse both the order of the words and the reading of the *Tex. Rec.* is different from that of the best MSS. The sentence should read: **the Christ which was appointed for you, even Jesus.** Not only is this the more authoritative reading but it agrees with the proofs which St Peter presently cites (*v.* 25), "Ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers." The Christ, the Messiah, had been appointed and promised unto the Jewish nation, and now the promise of the covenant is fulfilled in Jesus.

21. *whom the heaven must receive*] and retain, as we are witnesses that He has been taken up into heaven.

until the times of restitution] Better, **restoration** *of all things*, i.e. at Christ's second coming. But this phrase, "the restoration of all things," is used in two senses in N.T. First it is said (Matt. xvii. 11; Mark ix. 12) that Elias must "first come and restore all things." There it signifies the beginning of Christ's Kingdom. As Christ's death was for all men's redemption, the restoration of all things may be said to have begun then. In the present verse the words have reference to the time when the course of that restoration shall be completed.

which God hath spoken] Better, *of which* [i. e. *times*] *God hath spoken.*

all his holy prophets] *All* is omitted in the best MSS.

since the world began] See *v.* 18.

22. *For Moses truly said*] *Truly* is here the rendering of the particle μέν, and is likely to be misunderstood, as though it meant *verily*. Read *For* **indeed** *Moses said.* Here the Apostle cites the prophecies to which he has been alluding. First from Deut. xviii. 15 he points out that the prophet who had been promised was to be of their brethren, as Moses had been. This was a comparison which the Jews themselves were fond of making, and they often identified the prophet of whom Moses spake with the Messiah. Thus the *Midrash Rabbah* on Eccl. i. 9 says, "Rabbi Berakhiah in the name of Rabbi Yizkhak [Isaac] says: 'As was the former redeemer so shall the latter redeemer be.' While of the former redeemer it is said (Exod. iv. 20), 'And Moses took his wife and his sons and set them upon an ass,' so of the latter: for it says

fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all *things* whatsoever he shall say
23 unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be de-
24 stroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have
25 spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God

(Zech. ix. 9), 'He is lowly and riding upon an ass.' And while the former redeemer brought down manna, as it says (Exod. xvi. 4), 'Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you,' so the latter redeemer will bring down manna. For it says (Ps. lxxii. 16), 'There shall be abundance of corn in the land.' And as the former redeemer caused the well to spring up (see Numb. xxi. 17), so the latter redeemer shall also cause the waters to spring up. For it says (Joel iii. 18), 'A fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.'"

him shall ye hear] i.e. those who have "ears to hear" when the prophet comes and speaks. The next verse shews that all the nation were not included in the "ye."

24. *all the prophets from Samuel*] To other prophecies St Peter only makes a general reference. We learn (*Midrash Shemuel*, c. 24) that Samuel was called by the Jews "Rabban," the chief and teacher of the prophets, and there are several reasons why he is put in this foremost place. (1) We never read of a school of the prophets before his time. (2) His mother Hannah is the first person in Holy Writ who speaks of the Messiah (1 Sam. ii. 10), "God's anointed." (3) Jewish tradition says that the man of God who came to Eli (1 Sam. ii. 27) was Elkanah. The Targum on 1 Sam. x. 12, "But who is their *father*?" explains *father* by *Rabbi*, and refers the word to Samuel, so that the question in that verse would imply: "Why do you wonder at Saul among the prophets? Who is it that instructs the prophets? Is it not Samuel? And has not Saul been with him just now and been anointed by him?" All this could be said without the speaker having any knowledge that Saul was to be king. For the use of *father* as=*teacher* or *Rabbi* cf. Elisha's cry to Elijah (2 Kings ii. 12), "My father, my father."

as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days] The verbs are aorist. Read, *as many as* **spake they also told** *of these days*. The latter verb is without the preposition προ in the best MSS., and so is not=*foretold* but *told*. The prophet was one who spoke *for* God, gave a message from Him, but was not necessarily a foreteller of the future.

25. *Ye are the children* [better, **sons**] *of the prophets*] i. e. of the same race, and therefore what the prophets spake is meant for you. The prophet *foretold* by Moses is raised up for you.

and [*sons*] *of the covenant*] Therefore, heirs to its promises and its

made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, 26
sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from *his* iniquities.

1—12. *First arrest of the Apostles. Their hearing and defence.*

And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the 4
captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

obligations. So (2 Kings xiv. 14) *hostages* are called literally *sons of the pledgings* or compacts.

saying unto Abraham] Gen. xxii. 18.

26. *Unto you first*] That the Jews might first receive the blessing themselves, and then spread it abroad.

God, having raised up] Not spoken here of the resurrection of Jesus, but recalling the promise of Moses (*v.* 22) that a prophet should be raised up and sent unto the people.

his Son Jesus] his Servant (as *v.* 13). The best authorities omit *Jesus*.

sent him to bless you] by the times of refreshing alluded to *v.* 19. The way and means to which blessing is to be by the repentance and turning again to which the Apostle has been exhorting them.

IV. 1—12. First arrest of the Apostles. Their hearing and defence.

1. *And as they spake unto the people*] The movements of the Apostles had by this time become an object of concern to the authorities in Jerusalem. See their complaint (v. 28). There is no note of time at the beginning of chap. iii. to indicate what period had elapsed since Pentecost before the lame man was healed. But news soon spread in the city as we can learn from the events related in the previous chapter.

the priests] Those whose duty it was at the time to take charge of the Temple services, and who probably had taken offence at the multitudes assembled in the Temple court. The division of the priests was into twenty-four courses, each of which was to serve in the Temple for a week, see 1 Chron. xxiv. 1—19; 2 Chron. xxiii. 8. It was during such service in the order of his course, that the promise of the birth of John the Baptist was made to Zechariah the priest (Luke i. 5—8). Some authorities read *high priests*.

and the captain of the temple] There is mentioned in the O. T. an officer whose title is "the ruler of the house of God" (1 Chron. ix. 11; 2 Chron. xxxi. 13; Neh. xi. 11). He was not a military officer, but had charge of the guard of priests and Levites who watched the Temple at night. There are two titles given to such an officer in the later writings

of the Jews, (1) the *Memunneh* (Mishna *Tamid* I.), a kind of prefect of the Temple guard, and (2) a higher officer called "the captain of the mountain of the [Lord's] house." (Mishna *Middoth* II.) Rabbenu Shimshon describes this second officer as "the Commander who was set over every watch of those that watched in the less sacred portion of the Temple." He was apparently a civil as well as religious official, for we find (v. 26) that he goes with "the officers" to make the second arrest of the Apostles.

and the Sadducees] This was the name of one of the most influential sects among the Jews in our Lord's time. Their name has been variously explained. The Jewish authorities state that the name, which they write *Tsedukim*, is derived from *Tsadok* (Zadok) the proper name, and that thus they are "the followers of Zadok." The Zadok from whom they derive the title is said to have been a disciple of Antigonus of Socho. This Antigonus is the second in order of the Jewish Fathers whose sayings are recorded in the *Pirke Aboth*, and the commentators thereon mention two of his pupils, Zadok and Baithos, to the latter of whom, and to his followers, they attribute the teaching that "there was nothing for them in the world to come." But it is perhaps more probable, from their constant connection with the priests, that the name of the Sadducees was derived from the more famous Zadok who became high priest in the reign of King Solomon (1 Kings ii. 35). We read of the distinction of his descendants as "the sons of Zadok" and "the priests the Levites of the seed of Zadok" even as late as the description of Ezekiel's Temple (Ezek. xl. 46, xliv. 15). The probability of this priestly descent of the sect of the Sadducees is strengthened by the way in which they are mentioned Acts v. 17, "Then rose up *the high priest and all they that were with him* (*which is the sect of the Sadducees*)." The derivation which makes their name the plural of the Hebrew adjective *Tsaddik* = righteous, has not much authority to support it.

The teaching of the Sadducees is partly described Acts xxiii. 8. They "say that there is no resurrection neither angel nor spirit." In addition to this they attached no authority to the Oral Law, while the Pharisees maintained that the greater portion thereof had been transmitted to them from Moses. The Sadducees also taught the doctrine of the freedom of the will of men. The statement that they rejected all the Old Testament Scriptures except the Pentateuch has no confirmation in Josephus and has arisen from a confusion of the Sadducees with the Samaritans. Josephus (*Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 4) says "their doctrine is accepted only by a few, but yet by those of the greatest dignity," a statement fully borne out by the influential position in which we find them when the history of the Acts opens. They play no very prominent part in the Gospel history, because the teaching of Christ while on earth was directed more specially against the formalism and outward show of religion that prevailed among the Pharisees. It is only when the doctrine of the resurrection begins to be preached that the hostility of the Sadducees makes itself apparent.

came upon them] to arrest them. The same word is used as of the action of the chief captain (xxiii. 27), "Then *came I* (upon them) with an army and rescued him." See note there.

being grieved that they taught the people, and preached 2
through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they 3
laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next
day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them 4
which heard the word believed; and the number of the

2. *being grieved*] Better, *being troubled*. The word signifies *thoroughly pained*. It is used (xvi. 18) of St Paul's feeling when the "damsel possessed with a spirit of divination" cried after him at Philippi.

that they taught the people] One objection which the scribes and priests would feel towards the Apostles would be that they were "unlearned and ignorant men" (*v.* 13), and so not deemed fit to teach.

and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead] Better, *and* published in *Jesus*. This would rouse the feelings of the Sadducees. The resurrection is said to be *in* Jesus, because His resurrection was a pledge that all should rise. "In Christ all shall be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). The language of the Apostles in the Acts does not dwell on this as a consequence of the resurrection of Jesus, for like all Jewish teaching, what they said was historical rather than doctrinal.

3. *and put them in hold*] i. e. in prison. The word means *ward*, safe keeping. And it is worth noticing on the use of it, that the Jews only employed imprisonment for this precautionary purpose. It was not a mode of punishment with them, and where we find mention of it so used in the Scripture records, the authorities who inflicted it were not Jewish.

unto the next day: for it was now eventide] The Jews were not allowed to give judgment in the night, and their day ceased with the twelfth hour. It was already about the ninth hour when Peter and John were going up to the Temple (iii. 1), so that before the address of Peter and the arrest of him and John was completed it would be too late to enter on a judicial enquiry. The Rabbis founded the prohibition on Jer. xxi. 12, "O house of David, thus saith the Lord, Execute judgment *in the morning*." In Mishna *Sanhedrin* IV. 1 it is said: "Judgments about money may be commenced in the day and concluded in the night, but judgments about life must be begun in the day and concluded in the day." And even the rule about the declaration of the new moon, which was looked on as a judicial proceeding, is similarly regulated (Mishna *Rosh ha-Shanah* III. 1), and it may not be declared unless the examination of the witnesses, and all other preliminaries enjoined before its proclamation, be completed before dark.

4. *Howbeit*] Better, *But*, i. e. not being deterred by the arrest of the Apostles.

many of them which heard the word believed] on Jesus; for Peter had set Him before them as that Prophet concerning whom Moses had spoken.

and the number of the men was] [better, came to] *about five thousand*] That is, the society had been increased by nearly two thousand converts since the day of Pentecost (ii. 41).

5 men was about five thousand. And it came to pass on the
6 morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas

5. *And it came to pass on the morrow*] When the investigation was permitted to be held.

that their rulers, and elders] Here we see that the party of the Sadducees was the party of power and influence at this time.

and scribes] For these were not only the copyists, but the interpreters and expounders of the Law to the people, and any new teaching would naturally be disliked by them. On the difference between Christ's teaching and that of the scribes see Matt. vii. 29.

6. *and Annas the high priest*] was there. The verb is understood. Annas (called Ananus in Josephus), son of one Seth, was made high-priest (A.D. 7) by the Roman governor Quirinus [Cyrenius], and so continued till A.D. 14 (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 2. 1). We do not find that he was ever again appointed to the office, though St Luke here calls him high-priest. But the way in which he is mentioned at the time of the trial of Christ, who was brought, as we read, before Annas first (John xviii. 13), and sent by him afterwards bound unto Caiaphas, shews that, though not actual high-priest, yet his position in the eyes of the people of Jerusalem was one which justified them in bringing Jesus to him as soon as he was seized. It is difficult to explain from the words of the New Test. the relation of these two men in their office. Caiaphas is expressly called high-priest by St John, yet we are not told why Christ was not at once brought to him. It may be that one was acting high-priest, while the other was *nasi* or president of the Sanhedrin. Moreover it is not improbable that Annas, having been high-priest before, and only deposed from the office by the Roman governor Gratus, would, both during the short high-priesthood of his son Eleazar (A.D. 16), and the longer high-priesthood of Caiaphas, his son-in-law (A.D. 25—37), exercise much influence by reason of his age and experience, and might, from his former tenure of the office, even be spoken of as high-priest. It is clear that he was at the head of one of the most influential Jewish families, for before his death, five of his sons had been high-priests (Joseph. *Antiq.* XX. 9. 1). We can see from Luke iii. 2, where both Annas and Caiaphas are said to be high-priests, that there was some laxity in the common use of the title. So far only does the New Testament carry us, but when we come to examine the Old Testament, and the records of later Jewish literature, there seems every reason to conclude that the expressions which seem somewhat hard to reconcile are exactly those which would naturally be employed. We find that Moses, who is himself counted (Ps. xcix. 6) God's priest on the same level with Aaron, anointed not Aaron only, but his sons at the same time (Exod. xl. 12—15) to be high-priests. Also (Numb. xxxi. 6) Phinehas the son of Eleazar is sent to the war against the Midianites with "the holy instruments" (i.e. the Urim and Thummim), which shews that he was high-priest at the same time as Eleazar his father. Again in later times (2 Kings xxv. 18) we have mention made of "Seraiah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest," which the Targum ex-

the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander,

plains as "high-priest and Sagan" or deputy high-priest. The Talmud makes it very clear that there was a special arrangement for providing on some occasions such a deputy for the high-priest. Thus (Mishna *Joma* I. 1) it says, "Seven days before the day of atonement they remove the high-priest from his house to the chamber of the assessors, and they provide another priest in his place lest any disqualification should befal him." On this passage Rashi's note is "*to be high-priest instead of him*:" and a little later on in the same treatise (T. B. *Joma* 39 a) it is said concerning the services of the day of atonement: "Rabbi Khanina the Sagan of the priests (and so one qualified to speak on the duties of the office) said: Why does the Sagan stand on the right hand of the high-priest (when the lots are being cast for the goats)?" The answer is, "So that if any disqualification should befal him, the Sagan may go in (to the Holy of Holies) and perform the service in his stead." Cp. also *Midrash Rabbah* on Leviticus (par. 20 *ad fin.*). "If there was any defilement on Aaron, Eleazar served (as high-priest), and if there was any defilement on Eleazar, Ithamar served." (On the slight matters which caused such ceremonial defilement, see note on x. 28.) And in the same chapter we find "Had not Elisheba (Exod. vi. 23, the wife of Aaron) joy in this world who saw five crowns (i.e. subjects for rejoicing) in one day? her brother-in-law (Moses) a king (Deut. xxxiii. 5); her brother (Naashon) *nasi*, i.e. president, of the tribe of Judah; her husband high-priest; her two sons, sagans of the high-priest; and Phinehas her grandson anointed for the war." These notices make it clear that from the earliest times down to a period posterior to the date of the Acts, there were occasions, and these not unfrequent, when two men were called high-priests at the same time.

That one who had been high-priest should still retain the title may be seen from the principle laid down in several places in the Talmud, (see Mishna *Shekalim* VI. 6, *ed. princ. Jerus.*), viz. that "you may elevate in a sacred office or service, but you cannot bring down," as with us "once a Bishop, always a Bishop." The illustration given is that you might lay the shewbread on a marble table first, and afterwards on a golden one, but the contrary order of proceeding was forbidden. (For another illustration, see note on vi. 3.) Therefore Annas, having been high-priest, could, according to Jewish usage, never be called by any lower title.

The relationship between Annas and Caiaphas and the seniority of the former is enough to explain the conduct of the crowd in bringing Jesus to him first: while the omission of the word high-priest (Acts iv. 6) with the name of Caiaphas is no more a proof that he was not also known to be high-priest, as well as Annas, than the words of St Mark's Gospel (xvi. 7), "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter," can be made evidence that Peter was not one of the disciples. For a similar phrase cp. v. 29 and the note there.

and Caiaphas] He was also called Joseph, and was son-in-law to Annas.

and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were
7 gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set
them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what
8 name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy
Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and
9 elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good

and John] This is the same name as Johanan, and Lightfoot concludes that this person was the famous Johanan ben Zaccai, who by his influence with Vespasian procured permission for many of the Jews to settle in Jamnia (Yavneh) after the destruction of their city, and himself became head of the synagogue there.

and Alexander] of whom nothing is known more than can be gathered from this mention of him.

and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest] And these would probably all be of the Sadducees' party.

were gathered together at (MSS. in) *Jerusalem*] These words which A. V. places at the end of *v.* 6 are in the Greek a part of *v.* 5, and it is better to insert them there, because the MSS. of most authority make the names in *v.* 6 all nominatives and subjects to a new verb. It may have been that some of the authorities were not residents in Jerusalem, but had to be summoned.

7. *And when they had set them in the midst*] The council or Sanhedrin was assembled as the *Beth-din*, in the house of judgment.

they asked, By what power, or by what name, &c.] For *power*, the original has the same word as is used so often of Christ's miracles, and generally rendered *mighty works*. *Name* is=authority. The force of the expression is perhaps felt better, if the preposition ἐν be rendered literally *in* rather than *by*; certainly so in the second member of the sentence.

8. *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost*] The Spirit of God upon him had changed him "into another man." Cf. 1 Sam. x. 6.

said unto them, Ye rulers of the people] For this was the highest judicial tribunal which the Jews had.

and elders of Israel] The best authorities omit *of Israel*. The council was composed of the *chief priests*, i.e. the heads of each of the twenty-four classes into which the priests were divided, the *scribes*, men who were skilled in all the Jewish law, and the *elders*, grave and learned men chosen to complete the number, which is stated to have been in all seventy-one.

9. *if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man*] Both the nouns are without the article. Read "*a* good deed done to *an* impotent man." Of=concerning, as we still use it in "to speak of." St Peter's words imply that perhaps there would be some other charge brought against them, for teachers of a new doctrine who had in a brief space gained five thousand followers must have attracted much notice in Jerusalem. Nor is it long before we hear (vi. 13) blasphemy "against the Temple and the law" laid to the charge of Stephen, whose

deed done to the impotent man, by what *means* he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of 10
Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this *man* stand here before you whole. This is the 11
stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither 12
is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

preaching (for this accusation precedes Stephen's defence) must have been of the same character as that of Peter and John.

by what means he is made whole] The Greek has *this* (man), the demonstrative pronoun, for the man was there in the council-house to be seen by all. See *v.* 14.

10. *by the name of Jesus*] Read *in* the name, as before.

whom ye crucified] i.e. by the Roman soldiers. So (2 Sam. xii. 9) David is said to have killed Uriah, though it is added "by the sword of the children of Ammon."

even by him] The Greek seems rather to refer back to the former clause of the verse, and to be better rendered *even in this* (name).

11. *This* (i.e. Jesus) *is the stone which was set at nought of you* [*the*] *builders*] There is the definite article in the original. The council are fitly called the builders, for on them depended the whole religious and civil government of the people. St Peter, with his mind now enlightened to apply the Scriptures, uses the words of the Psalmist (cxviii. 22) as spoken prophetically of Christ. Christ had already (Matt. xxi. 42) applied these words to Himself and to the way in which He was being rejected of the Jews, in the close of one of His parables which the Pharisees felt had been spoken against them.

which is become the head of the corner] Christ, now exalted into heaven, is no longer the despised, but has become the most important, stone in the new building of the Christian society, cp. Eph. ii. 20—22. St Peter uses this quotation in his Epistle (1 Pet. ii. 7), and joins with it a passage (Isa. xxviii. 16) where the like figure is employed prophetically of the Messiah, "the foundation stone laid in Zion."

12. *Neither is there salvation in any other*] Rather, **And our** *salvation is not in any other.* The article with the noun (ἡ σωτηρία) seems thus better expressed. St Peter thus intimates that the cure of the lame man is only a sign of the power of salvation for the soul which was in Jesus. The people were to draw from the effect produced by "Arise and walk," the conclusion that the same power could as surely give the greater blessing, "thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. ix. 5).

given among men] Communicated to men by God, as a means of salvation.

whereby we must be saved] Through whom we must of necessity seek our salvation if we would be saved.

13—22. *The Apostles are dismissed unpunished.*

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they 14 had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against 15 *it.* But when they had commanded them to go aside out of 16 the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell

13—22. THE APOSTLES ARE DISMISSED UNPUNISHED.

13. *the boldness*] The word implies freedom and readiness of speech such as would not be expected from the unlearned.

of Peter and John] Here we have evidence that not all the speeches which were made are reported by St Luke, for we have no record of any word spoken by John, yet his boldness of speech, no less than St Peter's, is observed by the council. Christ's speeches had produced a like effect (John vii. 15).

ignorant men] The Greek signifies *plebeian*, as opposed to noble men. Render, **common.**

they took knowledge of them] These words have been interpreted as though they meant that the members of the Sanhedrin now for the first time discovered the relation in which the two Apostles stood to Jesus. Those who press such a rendering must overlook the force of the very same verb as used in iii. 10, "They *knew* that it was he which sat for alms." The men of whom this is said had known the cripple for years, but now observed in addition that he was a cripple no longer, though still the same man whom they had so long seen begging. Just so with the Jewish authorities; they could hardly fail to have known the connection of the preachers with Jesus after the sermon on the day of Pentecost and the events which followed it, and now they *further* (ἐπί) notice that as the Master's words had been powerful, so there was like power in the language of those who had been with Him. We are told (John xviii. 15) of one disciple, taken always to be St John himself, who was known to the high-priest before the Crucifixion.

14. It has been asked on this verse: Why the sight of the healed man so utterly confounded the judges that they had not a word to say. We may see from what happened afterwards that there were men in the council not without the thought that God was really working through the Apostles. Gamaliel says (v. 39) "If this work be of God," and if this feeling operated in him, the recognized head of the Jewish court, it is not unlikely that others were silent with the consideration that "haply they might be fighting against God."

15. *to go aside out of the council*] To leave the council chamber, while the members of the council discussed what should be done.

16. *manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem*] Because all the

in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*. But that it spread 17
no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them,
that *they* speak henceforth to no man in this name. And 18
they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all
nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John 19
answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the
sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God,
judge ye. For we cannot but speak *the things* which we 20
have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened 21

inhabitants knew the beggar at the Temple-gate, and that he had been lame all his life. There could only be two grounds on which, in reference to the cure of the cripple, the Apostles could be worthy of punishment: (1) If it were a case of imposture, but this nobody in the council or anywhere else insinuated, or (2) if the miracle had been wrought by some unlawful agency (Deut. xiii.). The question of the Sanhedrin points in this direction, "By what power have ye done this?" But Peter from the first (iii. 13) had ascribed the miracle to the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," and again testifies that it is God through Jesus Christ that hath made the man whole. So that there was no charge possible on the second ground.

17. *But that it spread*] i. e. the fame of the miracle and the consequent belief in the Divinity of Jesus.

let us straitly threaten them] The best MSS. omit the word here rendered *straitly*. The literal translation of the Received Text is "let us threaten them with a threat," a Hebrew mode of expression often imitated in the N.T., but apparently not found here in the earliest copies.

in this name] The preposition here is ἐπὶ, not ἐν, as in *v.* 7. The force of it is the same which it has in John xii. 16, "they remembered that these things were written *of* him." The Apostles were forbidden to preach about the name, i.e. the authority and Divinity, of Jesus.

18. *And they called them*] back again into the council chamber.

and commanded them] The verb is frequently used of the injunctions which our Lord gave that His miraculous deeds should not be spread abroad (Mark vi. 8; Luke v. 14, &c.). The pronoun *them* is not found in the best MSS.

19. *Peter and John*] Both alike express their determination to publish the news of Christ's life and resurrection. The reason why both names are here mentioned may be that each was separately appealed to for a promise to desist. For an instance of like firmness in a good cause cp. 2 Macc. vii. 30.

judge ye] Come to whatever decision you please. "We are not careful to answer you in this matter."

20. *the things which we have seen and heard*] Better, *which we saw and heard*. For their testimony related to the whole life of Jesus.

21. *further threatened*] This was all they could venture on, because the multitude knew that the lame man had been healed, and that there

them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all *men* glorified
22 God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

23—31. *The Apostles released. Their Prayer and its Answer.*

23 And being let go, they went to their own *company*, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto
24 them. And when they heard *that*, they lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God,

was no charge against the Apostles for which they deserved punishment. They could not say that the miracle was untrue, for there was the man standing by, and proving its reality; and they could not inflict a punishment "for a good deed," nor could they find any ground for a charge in the declaration that the man had been healed in the name of Jesus.

how they might punish]=on what pretext, or, in what way, without enraging the populace.

all men glorified God] St Peter's speech had made it clear whence the power to heal was given. See iii. 13.

22. *the man was above forty years old*] To one who looked on the circumstances with a physician's eye, as St Luke would (Col. iv. 14), this feature would be most noticeable. For limbs unused shrink and wither, and become disproportionate to the other parts of the frame. The physician's description is also evident in the two unique words (*βάσεις* and *σφυρά*) which are used (iii. 7) to describe the cure of the cripple.

on whom this miracle of healing was shewed] The word here used for miracle=sign. This the A.V. has endeavoured to represent by the use of the verb *shewed*. Lit., "on whom this *sign* of healing was *wrought*."

23—31. The Apostles released. Their Prayer and its Answer.

23. *to their own company*] Perhaps still abiding in the upper room which they had occupied before Pentecost. Because St Peter on a later occasion (xii. 12) made his way, after his deliverance from prison, to the house of Mary the mother of John Mark where many were gathered together praying, some have thought that this was the house where the Apostles had dwelt from the first. Such men at such a time would have neither means (see iii. 6) nor inclination to change from house to house. And Christ's injunction (Luke x. 7), "Go not from house to house," was given with a purpose which the Apostles would be likely to bear in mind and act upon.

24. *And when they heard that* (better *it*)] The Greek=*and having heard.*

they lift up their voice to God with one accord, and said] The words

which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David 25
hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain *things*? The kings of the 26
earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.
For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast 27
anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gen-

of the prayer which follows have so direct a reference to the circumstances which had just occurred that we cannot interpret otherwise than that to the prayer, uttered by the lips of one, all the rest, with one mind, pronounced fervent Amens. "The author (says Zeller) takes no forbidden liberty when he collects the concordant expressions of individuals into one common expression."

Lord] Lit. *Master*. The word is not often used of God (Luke ii. 29) or Christ, but it is worth notice that St Peter (2 Pet. ii. 1) and St Jude (4) apply it to Jesus.

thou art God] The words *art God* are not in the oldest MSS. but the clause reads, *O Lord, thou that hast made, &c.*

25. In the first part of this verse there is some confusion in the Greek text. The most authoritative reading may be translated *who by the Holy Ghost* [through] *the mouth of our father David thy servant hast said*. From the *Rec. Text* there has been omitted "the Holy Ghost," and perhaps the preposition *by* was repeated before "the mouth." But the order in which the Greek words stand makes it difficult to see what has happened, for even in the best MSS. their arrangement is much involved.

The Apostle now proceeds to apply the words of the second Psalm, which has been admitted by the Jews themselves to be Messianic, to the circumstances under which Christ was put to death.

Why did the heathen rage] Better, *the nations*, or *the Gentiles*, as it is rendered *v.* 27.

The Psalm in its first application probably referred to some revolt against the king of Israel. We have such a revolt mentioned in David's reign (2 Sam. viii.), where the Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites and other nations were conquered by David, after being in vain rebellion.

The words of the Psalm are quoted from the Septuagint.

27. *For of a truth*] Here the best MSS. insert the words *in this city*. The Apostle proceeds here to apply the language of the Psalmist to the events preceding the Crucifixion. The insertion of *in this city* is very natural under such circumstances.

against thy holy child Jesus] Read here, **Servant** Jesus, as iii. 13, for the original is the same though differently translated in the A.V.

whom thou hast anointed] By the descent of the Holy Ghost at His Baptism. (Matt. iii. 16.)

both Herod] The representative of the rulers of the Jews. This Herod was Antipas the son of Herod the Great by his Samaritan wife

28 tiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for
to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined
29 before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threaten-
ings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness
30 *they* may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to
heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the
31 name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had
prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled
together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and
they spake the word of God with boldness.

Malthace. He was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (Luke iii. 19), and because our Lord belonged to Galilee Pilate took occasion to send Jesus to be examined by him, as Herod was in Jerusalem to keep the feast of the Passover.

and Pontius Pilate] who was the Roman Governor, and so in his person were represented many nations at this time under the sway of Rome. His officials and soldiers would be drawn from all lands, and the mockery to which Jesus was exposed at their hands might well be described as the rage of the Gentiles.

Pontius Pilate] was the sixth Roman procurator of Judæa; he was appointed A.D. 25—6 in the twelfth year of Tiberius, and he continued to hold the office till A.D. 36, when he was sent to Rome by Vitellius under an accusation brought against him by the Samaritans. Of his after life and his death there are many legends, but no history.

28. *for to do*, &c.] God made the passions, which the enemies of Jesus indulged, to be the instruments for working out His will. So men when they suppose they are choosing their own way, have the ends thereof shapen by God "rough-hew them how they will." Their misdeeds are made to execute the will of God, yet they are not on that account exempt from blame.

29. *behold their threatenings*] The Apostles are not disheartened, they are only drawing near to God for aid lest they should be in danger of becoming so.

with all boldness] The same freedom of speech which (iv. 13) had been afforded to them when they were before the council. Cp. Christ's promise that this should be so. (Luke xxi. 15.)

30. *by stretching forth*, &c.] Lit. *while thou stretchest forth.* Thus the mighty works were to be a sign and testimony to the words which the Apostles spake. For as had been said of their Master, none could do the works which they did except God were with him. (John iii. 2.)

by the name of thy holy child Jesus] Here we have the same word as in *v.* 27. Read "thy holy Servant Jesus."

31. *the place was shaken*] That they might feel at once that the God of all nature, to whom they had appealed (*v.* 24), was among them. In their immediate need an immediate answer is vouchsafed, and a token with it that their prayer was heard. Cp. xvi. 26 of the shaking of the prison at Philippi after the prayers of Paul and Silas.

32—37. *Unanimity and Love among the first Christians.*

And the multitude of them that believed were of one 32
heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought
of the *things* which he possessed was his own; but they
had all *things* common. And with great power gave the 33
apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and
great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any 34
among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors

spake the word of God] i.e. wherever they found occasion and opportunity, neglecting the threats of the council, and endowed with the boldness for which they had prayed.

32—37. UNANIMITY AND LOVE AMONG THE FIRST CHRISTIANS.

32. *of one heart and of one soul*] A Hebrew form of expressing complete accord. Thus (1 Chron. xii. 38) "all the rest of Israel were *of one heart* to make David king," and (Jer. xxxii. 39) "I will give them *one heart and one way*."

neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own] It is more emphatic in the Greek, *and not one of them said*, &c. Each felt that he held his possessions only as a trust, and if occasion called for it, they were to be given up. Such love towards one another, Christ had foretold, should be a mark of His disciples (John xiii. 35). All those who have sketched a perfect society, as Plato in his *Republic*, and Sir Thos. More in his *Utopia*, have placed among their regulations this kind of community of goods which was established by the first Christians. In theory it is the perfection of a commonwealth, but there is need of perfection in the citizens before it can be realized. There can be no question that an expectation of Christ's immediate return from heaven, acting along with the unity of thoughts and feeling, made these men willing to part with their possessions and goods, there being, as we shall see from the case of Ananias, no constraint upon them to do so.

33. *And with great power gave the apostles witness*] [Better, their witness.] The Greek verb implies a great deal more than our English *gave*. It is the word so constantly used for *paying a debt* (Matt. xviii. 25; Luke vii. 42), or *rendering an account* (Matt. xii. 36; Heb. xiii. 17). So that there is implied in it the sense of *obligation* under which the Apostles felt themselves to lie of declaring "the things which they saw and heard" (*v.* 20).

and great grace was upon them all] i.e. like their Master, while experiencing the favour of God, they were also finding favour with men. Cp. Acts v. 13.

34. *Neither was there any among them that lacked*] The A.V. omits the word *for*, which is represented in the Greek and is needed for the sense. "*For* neither was there, &c." This was one reason for their favour among men. All could see and admire the spirit of self-sacrifice which was exhibited by what they were doing.

of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the
35 *things* that were sold, and laid *them down* at the apostles'
feet: and distribution was made unto every man according
36 as he had need. And Joses, who by the apostles was sur-
named Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of
37 consolation,) a Levite, *and* of the country of Cyprus, having

brought the prices of the things that were sold] The language here expressly avoids saying that these men sold all they had. They sold some things, and the sum realized by what was sold was offered to the common store. We never hear that a similar fund was raised in any place except Jerusalem.

35. *and laid them down at the apostles' feet*] A significant act, whereby it was shewn that they gave the Apostles entire control over the bestowal of these sums. For the figure, cp. Ps. viii. 6, and Cicero *pro Flacco* (XXVII. § 68), *ante pedes praetoris* in foro expensum est auri pondo centum paullo minus.

and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need] Better, *unto each according as any had need.* There were no doubt many who were not in need, and they of course lived on their own. The distribution was intended only for the needy, as widows, &c., and for those who could not otherwise support themselves while they took part, as many did, in the active propagation of the new faith. It may be, too, that some were deprived of the means of support because they had become Christians. Cp. the threat of the authorities, John ix. 22.

36. *And Joses*] The same name as *Joseph*, which form the oldest MSS. give.

who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas] He was the companion of St Paul in his first missionary journey (Acts xiii. 2), and is often mentioned by St Luke. He was invited by St Paul to join him on his second journey, but as they disagreed about taking John Mark with them, they did not labour again, as far as we know, in the same field, and the writer leaves Barnabas (xv. 39) with the mention that "he took Mark and sailed to Cyprus."

which is, being interpreted] The explanation is added for the sake of Theophilus, who may have had no knowledge of the Hebrew (see i. 19).

son of consolation] More probably, *son of exhortation.* The Greek may be thus rendered, and the Hebrew noun *nebuah* is from the same root as the common word for *prophet.* The title may have been given to Barnabas from his ability as a preacher (xi. 23), though in this he seems (Acts xiv. 12) to have been less prominent than St Paul, as most men must have been. In describing the work of Barnabas in xi. 23 the verb used, "he exhorted," is that from which the noun in this verse is derived, and is akin to the word "Paraclete," which is so often translated "Comforter" when applied to the Holy Ghost, but rendered "advocate" in 1 John ii. 1 when used of the intercession of Jesus.

a Levite] The Levites in the Holy Land had no inheritance given to

land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

I—II. *Account of Ananias and Sapphira.*

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his 5

them, but were scattered through all the tribes; the same regulation may not, however, have applied to the Levites in other countries; and we are not informed where the field was situated which Barnabas sold. He may also have been a married man, and have held lands from his marriage.

of the country of Cyprus] The island still so called in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. We find Jews settled there in the Maccabean times (1 Macc. xv. 23). It was one of the places to which Paul and Barnabas went in their missionary journey, and it had been previously visited by some of the Christian teachers who were driven from Jerusalem by the persecution which succeeded the death of Stephen (Acts xi. 19).

37. *having land*] Lit. *a field.* It seems likely that Joses is chosen as an example of the primitive liberality of the Christian body, because there was something remarkable in the kind of gift or the nature of the sacrifice which he made.

V. 1—11. Account of Ananias and Sapphira.

The narrative with which this chapter commences is one which none but a veracious narrator would have inserted where it stands. The last chapter concludes with a description of the unity of heart and soul which prevailed among the brethren, and expressly notices that all were filled with the Holy Ghost. But as among the twelve Apostles there was a Judas, so into the infant Church there had intruded two at least whose professions were not sincere, and who were unworthy of the gifts of grace which, with the rest, they had received. The offence of Ananias and Sapphira shewed contempt for God, vanity and ambition in the offenders, and utter disregard of the corruption which they were bringing into the society. Such sin, committed in despite of the light which they possessed, called for a special mark of Divine indignation, and to those who, likewise filled with the Spirit, knew all that had been done and why it was done, there is no shock produced by the terrible doom of the sinners, nor any language employed in the narration but the simplest and plainest. A late-compiled story would have enlarged and spoken apologetically on the reasons for such a judgment, and would not have presented us with a bare recital of facts without comment.

1. *But a certain man*] It is not by way of contrast that the story of Ananias is put side by side with that of Barnabas, therefore much stress is not to be laid on the word *But.* Verse 36 of the last chapter begins, in the original, with the same conjunction, and it is often employed in narratives where only a simple connection

wife, sold a possession, and kept back *part* of the price,
his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part,
3 and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias,

of clauses is intended. Thus, Acts viii. 1—3, the same conjunction occurs four times over without any adversative sense.

named Ananias] The name was common. See Acts ix. 10—17, and xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1. It is the same as *Hananiah*, Jer. xxviii. 1; Dan. i. 6, 7, &c., where it is the Hebrew name of Shadrach, which is spelt *Ananias* in the "*Benedicite*," and that form of the name is found Tobit v. 12. It signifies "one to whom Jehovah has been gracious."

with Sapphira his wife] A name probably derived from the name of the precious stone *sapphire*, which word is found both in Hebrew and Greek.

sold a possession] The word may signify either lands, or buildings, or any kind of property. It is the word used of the young man who went away sorrowful from Jesus "for he had great possessions," Matt. xix. 22; Mark x. 22. The LXX. use it of vineyards (Hos. ii. 15).

2. *and kept back part of the price*] i.e. while at the same time they professed to be bringing the whole sum into the common fund. The portion which was kept back was probably not large, for otherwise the general sense of the value of the land would have made it conspicuous. The word translated "kept back" is the same which is rendered Tit. ii. 10 *purloining*, and in classical Greek it has frequently the meaning *to rob*.

his wife also being privy to it] This is mentioned to shew that the offence was an aggravated one, and had not been committed without deliberation and set purpose. She was a willing accomplice in the intended fraud.

and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet] Thus professing equal devotion with all the others who were making sacrifices for the cause of the faith. We are not told what they hoped to gain by their act, whether in reputation among the people (ii. 47), or, by giving what was supposed to be their whole estate (which may be implied in the vague word *possession*), to procure for themselves in perpetuity a maintenance from the common funds. The former ambition was most probably what led to their offence. They thought more of the display made at the Apostles' feet than of the offence before God's eyes. And we know from St Peter's Epistle (2 Pet. ii. 3) that it was soon foretold that men would arise in the Christian community, who "through covetousness would with feigned words make merchandise of" the society, and at a later date (Jude 11), these men are described as those who run "greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." We may therefore be convinced that in the example of Ananias we have a typical instance of the kind of offence into which at this time the Christian community was in danger of being tempted.

3. *But Peter said, Ananias, why*, &c.] The interrogative particle is of a strengthened form in the original, and seems to indicate that

why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it 4
remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto

there had been a possibility of resisting the influence which led to this offence, had Ananias been desirous to do so. We must believe that the Holy Spirit gave Peter knowledge of the deception which Ananias was seeking to practise on the Church, and most likely also of the punishment which should come upon the offender. Otherwise we can hardly account for the calm manner of the Apostle when such a startling judgment was inflicted in an instant.

hath Satan filled thine heart] i. e. made thee bold enough. Cp. Esth. vii. 5, "that durst presume in his heart," and Eccles. viii. 11.

to lie to the Holy Ghost] for it was the power of the Holy Ghost that was manifested in the Apostles. It is much to be noticed how from the first the Apostles disclaim any power in themselves. It is Christ who works the miracles, the God of Abraham who gives the power of healing, and the Holy Ghost who is grieved by sins like that of Ananias. There is no trace of any seeking after consideration for themselves and their deeds among the records of these Acts of the Apostles, and no sign could be more indicative of the earliest age of the Christian Church. Before the apostolic age was past the internal character of the Church was much altered from this.

and to keep back part of the price of the land] As before, the sense is that of fraudulent concealment and purloining.

4. *Whiles it remained, was it not thine own?*] The verb in the original is repeated. *Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own?* That is, there was no compulsion on him to sell it, the only thing expected from him being that, if he were moved to sell, he should honestly set forth what he had done. There seems to have been no necessity to give at all to the common fund unless a man felt that he could well afford to do so, nor to give all that he either had or realized by any sale, provided only he made honest declaration of what his gift really was. This is implied in the words which follow, which declare that the sum produced by any sale was at the seller's disposal until he made it over to the common fund.

why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?] The original is a translation of a Hebrew expression which is repeated several times in the prophet Haggai (i. 5, 7, ii. 18), and is rendered by the A. V. *Consider*. The force of the expression is "to lay anything (as a plan or a precept) deep in the heart," and it implies long and deep deliberation on the part of this offender. It was not a case of yielding to a sudden temptation, but the plan had been accepted into the heart, and fostered there till there seemed to be a way of carrying it out. Satan had filled his heart, but he had made no effort to cast out the intruder.

thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God] It is not intended to say that Ananias had *not* lied unto men at all, but that the gravity

5 God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that
6 heard these *things*. And the young *men* arose, wound him

of his offence was that he thought to deceive God. In *v.* 3 it is said that the deception had been practised towards the Holy Ghost, and so we learn hence the Divinity of the third Person of the Trinity.

5. *And Ananias hearing these words fell down*] Smitten through the power of that Spirit whom he had intended to deceive. Here is no description of a death from apoplexy or mental excitement under the rebuke of the Apostle, but a direct intervention of the Divine power.

Terrible as this Divine judgment was, we cannot wonder that it should be inflicted, for it was so done to check that kind of offence which brought in all the troubles of the early Church, and which though they be not so punished now, when Christ's Church has attained more firm hold on the world, yet would, if not terribly visited in these earlier days, have overthrown the whole work of the Apostles. Of a like character is the apparent severity of the penalty inflicted on Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, at the commencement of the Jewish priesthood (Lev. x. 2); and the way in which Aaron and his family are forbidden to mourn for those whom God so punished may teach us what interpretation to put upon the judgment inflicted on Ananias and Sapphira. For they were of the members of the infant Church; they had presumed to come nigh unto God and in a wrong spirit. On them, we may conclude, some gifts had been bestowed, and in this they differed from Simon Magus (viii. 20) and Elymas (xiii. 11), with whom they are sometimes compared, so that the words which God spake of Nadab and Abihu may be used of these offenders, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me." We see what evils the spirit of greed and hypocrisy wrought in the Corinthian Church, even to the profanation of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 17—21). Every good institution would have been thus perverted and, as is said of some in later times (Jude 4), they would have "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness." The very community of goods which here was instituted for a time, was in this way perverted and turned into an argument for a community of all things, which resulted in the vices for which the Nicolaitans (Rev. ii. 6, 15) are so severely censured in the Scriptures. The death of Ananias and his wife is the finger of God interposed to save his Church from danger, just as He interposed to build it up by stretching forth His hand to heal, and that through the name of His Servant Jesus mighty works might be wrought by the first preachers.

and great fear came on all them that heard these things] In the best MSS. *these things* is omitted. Read "that heard it."

This fear would deter for a while all who were not thoroughly in earnest from making profession of Christianity, a profession which the favour that had been shewn towards the society (iv. 33) might have induced many to make who would have been rather a hindrance than a help to the cause.

6. *And the young men arose*] (Lit. the younger.) Some have sug-

up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*. And it was about 7
the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing
what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, 8
Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she
said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How 9
is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the

gested that these were persons connected with the Church whose business it was to take charge of funerals. But it seems unlikely that, at a time when assistance had not been provided to relieve the Apostles from "serving tables" and distributing the funds to those who needed (vi. 1—4), there should already have been an organization for this less pressing necessity. The Greek word used here is not the same as in *v.* 10, and this variation seems to shew that "the young men" were not in any official position, but were only the most able physically to perform such an office as is here described. On the way in which the Jews looked on attention to funeral rites see note on viii. 2.

wound him up] wrapped the dead body about with the robe which he was wearing at the time.

and carried him out, and buried him] We know from what took place after the Crucifixion that graves were made ready beforehand, and in the caves where the dead were deposited, as we can see from the account of the raising of Lazarus, there (John xi. 43) needed little preparation, and they were closed by the simple means of a stone placed at the cave's mouth. So that it would not need much time to complete the whole work of burial. In hot climates burial must needs follow quickly after death. Cp. the brief time which Jehu allowed to pass after Jezebel's death (2 Kings ix. 34) before he gave orders for her burial.

7. *the space of three hours after*] Time enough for the bestowal of the dead body, but yet so short that the news of what had befallen her husband had not reached Sapphira. It may have been that their home was in the country at a distance from Jerusalem, and that the husband alone came in to offer the money by reason of the distance.

came in] i. e. to the room where Peter and the rest of the congregation were assembled.

8. *And Peter answered unto her*] This use of the English verb *answer*, where no question has preceded and often where no remark has gone before, is not uncommon in the Bible (cp. 1 Kings xiii. 6; Dan. ii. 14, 15, 26; Luke iii. 16), but in the present verse what St Peter says is not an answer but a *question*.

Tell me] The Apostle's question might have made Sapphira suspect that their scheme was discovered, but she is as firm in her story as her husband had been.

whether ye sold the land for so much?] i. e. and no more. St Peter mentioned the sum which Ananias had brought in, or perhaps it was lying on the ground where he had put it at the first.

9. *ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord*] To try

Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy hus-
10 band *are* at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell
she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost:
and the young men came in, and found her dead, and,
11 carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her husband. And great
fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard
these *things*.

whether the deception which you had planned would be found out; whether God's Spirit would make it known to us.

behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door] They were heard returning from the burial of Ananias.

and shall carry thee out] Better, *and they shall*, &c. thus making it clear that the verb refers to the bearers. St Peter, as before, was prompted by the Holy Ghost in what he said, and was enabled to predict the punishment of Sapphira for her persistent dissembling. We are not told that St Peter knew what would befal Ananias, but as the Spirit shewed him what was to come on the wife we may perhaps conclude that he knew what the fate of the husband would be also.

10. *Then fell she down straightway at his feet*] Close to the place where the money, for which they had sinned, had been laid, and where perhaps it was still lying. For we cannot think that St Peter would be willing to mix an offering given in such a hypocritical spirit with the more pure offerings of the other brethren. It may be that as he spoke, in *v.* 8, he pointed to the money still lying there unaccepted, "Did ye sell the land *for so much?*"

and yielded up the ghost] The verb is only used in the N. T. of the death of this husband and wife, and of the end of Herod Agrippa (Acts xii. 23).

and the young men came in, and found her dead] They came to join the congregation again, for the worship appears not to have ceased during the time between the death of Ananias and the arrival of Sapphira. And this may be the explanation of the wife's ignorance of her husband's fate. None had gone forth but the younger men to bury the dead body.

and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband] Probably all that was required to be done was to roll a stone from some cave's mouth and place the body within.

11. *And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things*] Lit. *upon the whole church and upon all that heard*, &c. To produce such a fear as should deter others from a like offence was God's intention in this miracle of punishment. And St Luke seems to have pointed to the reason by making here for the first time any mention of "the church" (see note on ii. 47). The true *ecclesia* must be free from such hypocritical professors, or its work could not advance. The lesson was to be stamped into the hearts of all who were fit to be of "the church," though at the same time it would strike deep into the minds of all others who learnt how the Spirit of God had

12—16. *Miraculous powers of the Apostles. Continued growth of the Church.*

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and 12
wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all
with one accord in Solomon's porch. And of the rest durst 13
no *man* join himself to them: but the people magnified

punished the lying lips of those who sought the praise of men rather than that of God.

12—16. MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE APOSTLES. CONTINUED GROWTH OF THE CHURCH.

12. *And by the hands of the apostles*, &c.] *By the hands* may here only be the Hebrew mode of expressing *by*. Cp. (Josh. xiv. 2) "By lot was their inheritance as the Lord commanded *by the hand* of Moses." But as in the description of our Lord's miracles we very often read "he laid *his hands* upon a few sick folk" (Mark vi. 5, &c.), and as it is said of the Apostles (Mark xvi. 18) "they shall lay their hands on the sick and they shall recover," it seems better to understand the words here of such acts of imposition of hands, though we presently find (*v.* 15) that the multitudes believed that a cure could be wrought without such an act.

and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch] This must refer to such assemblies as were held by the Apostles for conference and instruction when they went up at the usual times of prayer. Thus *all* will signify the whole company assembled on some such occasions, and not embrace every person who had joined the new teaching. They came to Solomon's porch, both teachers and hearers, with one common purpose, to tell and know more of the religion of Jesus. But it is not necessary to interpret the sentence to signify that they took a regular possession of this cloister as their place for worship (see iii. 11).

13. *And of the rest durst no man join himself to them*] The sentence seems to convey an opposition to what has been stated in *v.* 12, and should begin with *But*. The sense intended is that the assemblies of Christians made the porch of Solomon their special rendezvous when they went up to the Temple, seeing that it was there that the first addresses in the Temple-precincts had been given by St Peter. And while they were so assembled none of the other people who had not yet joined the new community ventured to attach themselves intrusively to the Christian body. The verb κολλᾶσθαι is used of Philip (viii. 29) when he is commanded "Go near and *join thyself* to this chariot," where the action meant by it is one that was to press some notice of Philip upon the eunuch. From such intrusion all who were not Christians held back, and left the worshippers in Solomon's porch alone.

but the people magnified them] Render, *howbeit the people*, &c. This is necessary because we have taken *but* as the conjunction at the beginning of the verse. There are two different conjunctions in the original.

14 them. And believers were the more added to the Lord,
15 multitudes both of men and women.) Insomuch that *they* brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter
16 passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about unto Jerusa-

Although the people (=the rest, who were not of the Church) held back from pressing themselves among the congregation, yet they greatly praised them for the words and works of which they heard and saw.

14. *And believers were the more added to the Lord*] In the Greek it is clearly seen that the words rendered *to the Lord* belong quite as closely to *believers* as to *were added*. "Persons believing in the Lord were added to His Church." The addition of this verse makes clear what has been said on *v.* 13, that the joining there mentioned was an intrusion into the congregation when they were assembled for public instruction. For the increase of the Church was not hindered in any degree. The Christians were held in reverent regard, and the faith which they preached gained multitudes of adherents.

15. *Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets*] Instead of the preposition *into*, the best authorities read *even...into*, "they even brought forth," &c.

These words are a description of one way in which the new believers gave evidence of their faith. To bring a sick person on a couch to the presence of Jesus was accepted by Him (Mark ii. 5) as a sign of true faith, and for the sake of the faith shewn by those who brought him the paralytic was made whole. So here, though we are not told of any cures wrought by the shadow of Peter, we may conclude that to the like faith God would give a like blessing.

and laid them on beds and couches] The warm climate making it possible for the sick to be exposed in the open air.

that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them] The order in the original is, *that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might*, &c. Peter is alone mentioned here because he was the most prominent figure, but we are not to conclude that no mighty works were done by the rest. These men who gave such an exhibition of faith have been described (*v.* 14) as *believers in the Lord*. There can therefore be no question as to what they regarded as the power which was to heal their sick. They did not believe on Peter, though they magnified him as the Lord's instrument; they did not ascribe healing power to Peter's shadow, though it might please God to make that a sacrament of healing, as to Israel in old times He had made the brazen serpent. They had seen health bestowed through the Apostle by the name of Christ, and to demonstrate their faith in that name, they bring their afflicted friends into the way of salvation.

16. *There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem*] The best MSS. have no word for *unto*. The construction without that preposition would be *and there came also together the multi-*

lem, bringing sick *folks*, and *them which were* vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17—32. *Arrest of the Twelve. Their miraculous deliverance and their Defence before the Sanhedrin.*

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were

tude out of the cities round about Jerusalem. The use of the word *city* (πόλις) is common even when the places so called are very insignificant, as of Nazareth (Matt. ii. 23), Nain (Luke vii. 11), and Arimathæa (Luke xxiii. 51).

bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits] It was recognized that the power of the Apostles extended not only to physical, but also to spiritual maladies. Indeed the whole history being of a supernatural character, the cures wrought on ordinary maladies were of the nature of signs and wonders, and spake of a power which was not human. The power here displayed is that which in Christ's own life was confessed to be that of the Son of God (Luke iv. 40, 41).

The verb in the original for *vexed* is found only here and in Luke vi. 18 in the N. T., and like the word rendered "gave up the ghost" (*vv.* 5, 10), is used frequently in the works of Greek medical writers, so that it is such a word as we should expect to find a physician using in the description of this malady.

unclean spirits] are those which are called *wicked* in other parts of the New Testament (Matt. xii. 45, &c.), and the former epithet is probably applied to them because the sufferer in his state of frenzy wandered into places where he would incur ceremonial defilement, as the demoniac who had his dwelling among the tombs (Mark v. 3), the latter on account of the evil effects so often patent in the condition of the afflicted person, as loss of speech, hearing and other senses, the belief of the Jews being that spirits afflicted with such maladies were the cause of the like affliction in human beings.

and they were healed every one] For it was only a complete faith which had prompted the bringing them unto the Apostles, and to such faith *all things* had been promised by Christ (Mark ix. 23).

17—32. ARREST OF THE TWELVE. THEIR MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE AND THEIR DEFENCE BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.

17. *Then the high priest rose up*] The conjunction at the beginning of the sentence should be *But*. While the multitudes thronged to be healed, the effect on the authorities was to provoke them to opposition.

rose up] The Greek word is used in this chapter of the insurrections of Theudas and Judas (*vv.* 36, 37) and in the next chapter (vi. 9) of the disputants with Stephen. It is often found without the sense of opposition which it has here and in those verses.

and all they that were with him] A phrase more comprehensive than that used in iv. 6, "as many as were of the kindred of the high priest." The opposition has had time to gather its forces and now represents not only the family of Annas, but the heads of the party of the Sadducees.

with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were
18 filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles,
19 and put them in the common prison. But *the* angel of the

which is the sect] The word is that which St Paul uses in his defence (Acts xxiv. 14) before Felix, "after the way which they call *heresy*." But he employs it without any sense of blame (xxvi. 5) about the Pharisees, and it is used of them also xv. 5. With a bad sense it is applied to the Nazarenes (xxiv. 5), and similarly xxviii. 22.

of the Sadducees] From *v.* 21 it will be seen that the statement of Josephus concerning the influence of this sect is fully borne out (*Antiq.* XIII. 11. 6), for they had the rich on their side. We have no certain evidence in Scripture that Annas was a Sadducee, but Josephus (*Antiq.* XX. 9. 1) tells us that his son Ananus [or Annas] was of this sect.

and were filled with indignation] The word used to express their feeling might better be rendered *jealousy*. What the historian is describing is an outbreak of party-feeling. The whole influence of the Sadducean party is called forth by their antagonism to the doctrine of the resurrection and their envy of the growth of the new movement.

18. *and laid their hands on the apostles*] The best MSS. omit *their*. The whole of the twelve are now seized, for the authorities are roused to activity. It is clear from this that, though St Luke has only mentioned the speeches of Peter, with some slight notice that John also was a speaker, yet all the Apostles were busy, and could have been quoted as preachers and teachers had it been any part of the compiler's purpose to write a history of all the Apostles.

and put them in the common prison] The noun is the same as in iv. 3, and the notion—that of *ward*, as a place of temporary imprisonment till the formal summoning of the council next day—should here be preserved. Read, **in public ward.** Such confinement was only precautionary and formed no part of the punishment intended by the Sadducees.

19. *But the angel of the Lord*] Better, **an** *angel by night opened the prison-doors*. As if for a protest against the actions of those who taught that "there was neither angel nor spirit." There is no possibility of explaining St Luke's words into anything but a miraculous deliverance. He gives no word that can be twisted into any other meaning. It was not an earthquake, it was not a friendly human being who interposed to procure the release of the Apostles. The writer readily acknowledges in this very chapter the intervention of Gamaliel and its effect, but he is here speaking of supernatural aid. If it be remarked that the Apostles make no mention of their miraculous deliverance when they are called upon for their defence, it may be answered that they in no case dwell on the miracles either wrought by or for them, except where they have been wrought under the eyes of men and are to be used as signs of the Divine power which was working in and for the Church. To enter on a description of a miracle which had been wrought as this deliverance had been, and to ground their claims to be heard upon circumstances of which the eyes of those to whom they

Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the 20
people all the words of this life. And when they heard 21
that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them

spoke did not bear testimony, is foreign to the whole character of the Apostolic ministry.

20. *Go, stand and speak in the temple*] There is a conjunction in the Greek which is not here expressed. Render, *Go ye and stand and speak.*

There was to be no attempt made to conceal their escape. They were to go back to the same place where their most frequent teachings had been given before, and they were to continue the same teaching. They are not directed to appeal to the multitude for sympathy, nor to try and excite any feeling against those who had arrested them.

to the people all the words of this life] Here we have another of the words by which St Luke emphasizes in the most natural manner the point at issue between the Sadducees and the Apostles.

this life] i.e. this future life, the promise of which has received its first fulfilment in the resurrection of Jesus. This was the teaching which the Sadducees could not tolerate, but which in spite of opposition was to be persisted in.

21. *early in the morning*] The words indicate a time as soon as possible after day dawn. They lost no time in obeying the command. How early it was possible for them to come to the Temple we find from the directions in the Talmud concerning the morning sacrifice. It is said (Mishna *Joma* III. 1), "The Memunneh (see note on iv. 1) said to them: Go ye out (on to the Temple wall or roof) and see whether the time for killing the sacrifice has arrived. If it had arrived, the outlooker said, 'It has flashed forth' (i.e. day has dawned). Matthia ben Shemuel said [that the form of question was] 'Has the whole face of the east become lit up as far as to Hebron? And the man answered, Yes.' So that the first sacrifice took place at the very peep of day." A like explanation is found Mishna *Tamid* III. 2.

But the high priest came] i.e. into the council chamber, to consult on what should be done with the prisoners, of whose release they had as yet heard nothing.

called the council together] This was evidently deemed a case of the utmost consequence, and all pains are bestowed to gather to the hearing the combined wisdom of the whole authorities, for now, as is seen from Gamaliel's presence, not Sadducees alone were called. The word here rendered *council* means probably the smaller Sanhedrin.

and all the senate of the children of Israel] Senate is here used in its original sense = the older men, and is a literal rendering of the Greek *gerousia*, meaning the great Sanhedrin of 71 elders. The name indicates

22 brought. But when the officers came, and found them not
23 in the prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we
24 found no *man* within. Now when the *high* priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow.
25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men

that these were assessors added to the council by reason of their age and weight of character. We find from the Jewish literature that such assessors were often appointed. In the extract Mishna *Joma* I. 1, quoted on iv. 6, the word for "assessors" is *parhedrin*, i.e. the Greek παρεδροι, and the adoption of such a word into the Jewish vocabulary shews that the office was not Jewish in origin but had become so firmly grafted among them as to justify the adoption of a foreign expression to describe it.

22. *But when the officers came*] The name may imply a military body or it may have been only some of the Levitical guard who were sent. The same word is used (Luke iv. 20) of the "minister" of the synagogue.

23. *The prison truly found we shut*] The word rendered *truly* is omitted in the best MSS.

and the keepers standing without before the doors] The best MSS. read, *and the keepers standing at the doors.* Of course they were unconscious that their charge was no longer there.

24. *Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple*] The best MSS. have only *Now when the captain of the temple.* The word which in the A. V. is rendered *high priest* is simply=*priest*, but the like usage is common enough in Hebrew.

On *the captain of the temple*, see iv. 1; and on *chief priests*, iv. 23.

heard these things] Better, *these words.* It refers simply to the report which the officers had just brought back.

they doubted of them whereunto this would grow] i.e. they were at a loss about what was said, and did not know what step to take next. It is worthy of notice that when the Apostles are brought before them in the end, the magistrates avoid all questions about how they had been released. They clearly wished to have no more testimony to the supernatural powers which had been so often manifested in connection with Jesus and His followers. Caiaphas and his party could not be ignorant how Jesus Himself had risen out of His grave to the great terror of the Jewish guard set over it. With the opinions these authorities held, we can quite understand their perplexity and their silence on the subject, at all events before the disciples and the multitude.

25. *Then came one and told them*] Better, *And there came*, &c. The English *then* is often in such a position taken for an adverb of time.

The proceedings were evidently well known, and the hall of judgment was not far from where the Apostles were teaching at the very time.

whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them, saying, Did not we straitly command you that *you* should not teach in this name? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and

are standing in the temple, and teaching the people] The order of the original should be preserved: *are in the temple standing*, &c., for the words look back to the command of the angel in *v.* 20. This *standing* implies the prominent and undaunted position which the Apostles had taken up. They were not like prisoners who had escaped, and so were seeking a place to hide themselves; but like men whose work had been interfered with, and who, as soon as they were able, had come back to it again.

26. *without violence*] Nor can we suppose that the Apostles were at all likely to offer resistance, for their examination before the council would afford them an opportunity of proclaiming the message of the Gospel.

lest they should have been stoned] We have already had evidence of the favour with which the disciples were looked upon by the people, and we can see from the account of the death of Stephen that the sudden outbreak of popular rage might result in the death of him against whom this feeling was displayed. And that the Jewish people were ready enough thus to take the law into their own hands, we can see from the Gospel history (John x. 31—33), and the parables of Jesus speak of such proceedings as though they were of no very rare occurrence (Matt. xxi. 35).

27. *And when they had brought them*] i.e. to the judgment hall.

28. *Did not we straitly command you*] The best authorities have here an affirmative sentence, *We straitly charged you*. The charge had been given only to Peter and John, but the council assume that it would have been by them conveyed to the rest of the twelve.

that you should not teach in this name] They go at once to that which is the great offence in their eyes. The name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they knew to have been crucified, but who was proclaimed to be alive again, and whose followers manifested such mighty works, was the object against which their power was directed.

and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine] A testimony from the mouth of enemies that the Apostles had laboured diligently and successfully to fulfil the first portion of Christ's command, that their preaching begin at Jerusalem.

and intend to bring this man's blood upon us] Better, *and* ye wish *to bring*, &c. It is a marvellous spectacle to see the judges take the place of culprits, and deprecate accusation where they would naturally be

the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey
30 God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up
31 Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for
32 to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And

dealing out penalties. But the invocation of the people before Christ's crucifixion, "His blood be upon us and upon our children" (Matt. xxvii. 25), was felt by the council to be likely to be brought to fulfilment.

29. *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said*] The Greek has no word for *other*. It is quite like the style of the New Testament to say "Peter and the apostles," and it is not implied hereby that Peter was excluded from the number of the Apostles, but, as he probably was the chief speaker, his name is singled out for prominence in the narrative (see note on iv. 6). Here again we have evidence that St Luke has made no attempt to do more than produce for us the substance of such speeches as he notices.

We ought to obey God rather than men] Better, *We* **must**, &c. In substance, though not in words, this is the argument used by Peter and John (iv. 19), though here more stress is laid upon the impossibility of doing otherwise than as they had begun.

30. *The God of our fathers raised up Jesus*] As Peter did in iii. 13, so here the Apostles point out that there is no severance of themselves from the worship of the Covenant God of Israel, but that they were teaching that His promise through Moses had now been fulfilled, for that in Jesus the promised prophet had appeared. Cp. Deut. xviii. 15, and St Peter's speech, Acts iii. 22.

whom ye slew and hanged on a tree] Better, *whom ye hanged on a tree and slew*. This sentence describes the Roman, and not the Jewish mode of execution. With the latter people only those who were already dead were to be hanged (Deut. xxi. 22; Josh. x. 26).

In the word which they use for *slew* the Apostles intimate that the guilt of the Crucifixion was as truly upon the Jews as if the act had been done by their hands, and not by those of the Roman soldiery.

The phrase *hanged on a tree* is used by St Peter again (x. 39), and by nobody else in the N.T. He also has a similar expression, *tree* for *cross* (1 Pet. ii. 24), "He bare our sins in his own body on the *tree*."

31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand*] The right hand is the symbol of might. Cf. Exod. xv. 6, and "His right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory" (Ps. xcviii. 1).

to be a Prince and a Saviour] Mark how with the claim of sovereignty there is closely joined the promise of salvation. If Christ seeks to rule over men it is that He may save them.

for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins] Thus offering the way of salvation to all those who were ready to accept it. These words to a Jew would have great significance, for they had a saying (T. B. *Sanhedrin* 113 a) that salvation was one of the things which God

we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

33—42. *Effect of the Apostles' defence. Counsel of Gamaliel. Release and subsequent conduct of the Twelve.*

When they heard *that*, they were cut *to the heart*, 33
and took counsel to slay them. Then stood there up 34
one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doc-

kept in His own power. If Christ then was to bestow this gift on Israel He must be owned by them as God.

32. *And we are his witnesses of these things*] The best texts omit *his*, while some ancient authorities add *in him* in place of *his*.

these things] i. e. the Crucifixion and the Resurrection and Ascension.

and so is also the Holy Ghost] *Also* is not found in the best MSS. Christ had said, while alive, concerning the Holy Ghost, "He shall testify of me" (John xv. 26). This He did in the minds of the Apostles by "bringing all things to their remembrance," and enlightening them to see how Christ's life had fulfilled the prophecies, and also in the mighty powers which through the outpouring of the Spirit they now possessed.

whom God hath given to them that obey him] Thus the disciples declare that the obedience to God, which at the outset (*v.* 29) they had proclaimed as their bounden duty, was also the reason why the Holy Ghost had been bestowed upon them, and leaving it to be gathered that what God has done He will do again, and bestow His gifts of grace on those who are willing to obey Him.

33—42. EFFECT OF THE APOSTLES' DEFENCE. COUNSEL OF GAMALIEL. RELEASE AND SUBSEQUENT CONDUCT OF THE TWELVE.

33. *When they heard that, they were cut to the heart*] There is no Greek here for *to the heart*, but as in the only other place in the N. T. where this verb is found (Acts vii. 54) those words are added to it, it is best here to supply them to complete the sense, which is the same here as in that passage. The effect described is not the compunction which leads to penitence, but the annoyance that results in more furious anger.

and took counsel to slay them] The best texts read, *and wished to slay them*. So to get rid of the fear of one man's blood being brought upon them, they would take the lives of twelve more.

34. *Then stood there up one in the council*] Better, *But there stood up*, &c. See note on *v.* 25.

a Pharisee, named Gamaliel] It may very well be believed that some small sympathy towards the Christian teachers would be roused in the breast of a Pharisee, because they maintained, as he did, the doctrine of a resurrection, but there is nothing in the speech of this Pharisee beyond a policy of inactivity.

This Gamaliel, called here a doctor of the law, is no doubt the same

tor of law, had in reputation among all the people, and
35 commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; and
said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to your-
36 selves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For

person who is mentioned (Acts xxii. 3) as the teacher of St Paul. He is known in Jewish writings as Gamaliel ha-Zaken (i.e. the older), and was the grandson of Hillel. He was alive during the time when Herod was beautifying the Temple. For in *Tosephta Shabbath* XIV. (*ed. Lemberg*) we read, "Rabbi Jose said, It happened that Rabbi Khalaphta went to Rabban Gamaliel (the younger, and grandson of the Gamaliel in our text) to Tiberias, and found him sitting at the table of Rabbi Jochanan ben-Nozâph, and in his (Gamaliel's) hand was the book of Job in Targum (i.e. in the Chaldee paraphrase), and he (Gamaliel) was reading in it. Rabbi Khalaphta said to him, I remember concerning Rabban Gamaliel the elder, the father of thy father, that he was sitting on a step in the Temple mount, and they brought before him the book of Job, in Targum, and he said to the builder, "Sink it (bury it) under this course of the wall." This could only have been when the walls were in building.

Gamaliel is said to have died 18 years before the Temple was destroyed.

In T. B. *Abodah Zarah* 11 a, in allusion to the custom of burning beds, clothes, and other things, at the funerals of great men (see Jer. xxxiv. 5), it is said, "When Rabban Gamaliel the elder died, Onkelos the proselyte burned in his honour the worth of 70 minæ of Tyrian money."

So great was Gamaliel's fame that we read (Mishna *Sotah* IX. 15) when he died "the glory of the Torah ceased, and purity and sanctity died out also." We can therefore understand that he was "had in reputation among all the people."

and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space] Instead of *the apostles*, the best authorities have *the men*. He wished them to be removed for a short time from the council room, that the conversation of himself and his colleagues might be the more unrestrained.

35. *Ye men of Israel*] It has been remarked upon the frequent occurrence of this and similar formulæ in the introduction of speeches in the Acts, that they are evidence that the speeches themselves are the composition of the writer of the book, and are only his own thoughts of the matter put into the mouths of the various speakers. After what has been said on the character of all the speeches, that they make no attempt to set before us all that was said on each occasion, but only the substance of what St Luke had received from eye and ear-witnesses, it can in no wise detract from the substantial veracity of all that is reported, if we find the compiler of the Acts, who was himself a Greek, giving the usual Greek form of introduction to the speeches of which he has shewn so often that he intends to supply only an outline.

take heed to yourselves] The phrase implies that thought is required before any action be taken. It is not, as the English words are sometimes taken to be, a warning against some danger which was impending.

before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be

36. *For before these days rose up Theudas*] Gamaliel proceeds to give illustrations that mere pretenders will come to naught. But about the mention of Theudas much discussion has been raised, because it is declared that the statements of Gamaliel contradict the facts recorded by Josephus, and therefore cannot be received as historic. In this way discredit would be thrown on all the rest of his speech.

It is true that Josephus mentions a Theudas (*Antiq.* XX. 5. 1) who rose up and professed himself a prophet, in the time when Fadus was procurator of Judæa, about A.D. 45 or 46, and persuaded a great part of the people to take their goods and follow him to the river Jordan, through which he promised he would afford them a miraculous passage. This man, who with many of his followers was destroyed, could clearly not be the leader of the revolt which took place before that raised by Judas of Galilee in the time of the taxing which took place some few years after our Lord was born. But when we turn to the history which Josephus gives of the events which preceded this rebellion of Judas we find him saying (*Antiq.* XVII. 10. 4), "At this time [i.e. in the days when Varus was president of Syria] there were *ten thousand* other disorders in Judæa, which were like tumults." Of these innumerable disturbances he gives account of no more than four, but presently in the same chapter says: "Judæa was full of robberies, and whenever the several companies of the rebels could light upon any one to head them, he was created a king immediately." Then in a brief space after (*Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 1) Josephus proceeds to mention Judas of Galilee, though he calls him sometimes (*Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 6; XX. 5. 2; *B. J.* II. 8. 1, and 17. 8) a Galilean and sometimes a Gaulonite (XVIII. 1. 1), and his rebellion in the days of the taxing. Now amid so many outbreaks, spoken of but not described, there is no violence in supposing that one may have been led by a Theudas, a name not very uncommon, and thus the order of events as stated by Gamaliel would be perfectly correct. The *great multitude* of the followers of the later Theudas indicates a far larger number than the *four hundred* of whom Gamaliel speaks. Moreover while Gamaliel's Theudas was killed and his followers dispersed, Josephus says that many of the adherents of his Theudas were slain, and many taken prisoners. There seems, therefore, more reason to identify this Theudas of whom mention is made by Gamaliel with some of the *ten thousand* rebels whom Josephus speaks of before the time of the census, than to suppose that Gamaliel, who is correct in his account of Judas, has mentioned in the other case a rebel who did not rise till long after the time of which he is speaking.

That such false leaders were numerous and had caused a terror in the minds of the more thoughtful among the Jews we can see from the Jewish literature which has come down to us. Thus (T. B. *Sanhedrin* 97 b) Rabbi Shemuel bar Nachmani on the authority of Rabbi Jonathan, expounding Habakkuk ii. 3, says, "It means, may his spirit be blown away (perish) whosoever over-anxiously calculates about the ends. For people have said [in consequence of such calculations] when the end [so calculated] came, and he [Messiah] did not come, that he

somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.
37 After this *man* rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dis-
38 persed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of
39 men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot

would never come at all. Yet wait anxiously for him, for it says if he tarry wait anxiously for him." We have here the despairing echo of Gamaliel's words, "Let them alone."

boasting himself to be somebody] Literally, *saying that he was*, &c. Of course each one of these leaders professed himself to be the Messiah, for that was what the people in their distress were ever looking for.

37. *Judas of Galilee*] With this account agrees the history of Josephus (*Antiq.* XVIII. 1. 1), except that, as has been already noticed, he calls Judas a *Gaulonite*, but as when speaking of the same man again (XX. 5. 2) he calls him Judas of *Galilee*, and in the same sentence alludes to the history before narrated "as we have shewn in a foregoing book," we can have no hesitation in accepting Gamaliel's story as the correct one, while at the same time we may learn from this example what value we ought to place on the accuracy of Josephus when we have to weigh his statements against those of the New Testament.

in the days of the taxing] Not the same which is mentioned Luke ii. 2. That was rather an *enrolment* or census-taking preliminary to taxation. The revolt of Judas, about seven years later, was caused by the actual imposition of a tax. Josephus says of it (XVIII. 1. 1): "Cyrenius came into Judæa to take an account of their substance," and afterwards "Judas said that this taxation was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert their liberty."

drew away much people after him] The Greek word rendered *much* is wanting in the best MSS. Read, *drew away* [some of the] *people after him.*

he also perished] Josephus gives no notice of the fate of Judas and his party, though he mentions the revolt several times and says (*B. J.* II. 8. 1) that this "Judas was a teacher of a peculiar sect of his own."

38. *it will come to nought*] As the verb is the same as that in the following verse it is better to render, *it will be overthrown.*

39. *but if it be of God*] The verb is not in the same mood as in the previous clause, and had the construction been in classical Greek, it might have indicated some opinion on Gamaliel's part of the truth of Christianity = "If it is [as it is] of God." But in the N. T. the construction indicates no more than a simple conditional. Yet to mark the difference of phrase, read here, *But if it is of God.*

ye cannot overthrow it] The best authorities read, *ye will not be able to overthrow it.*

overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called 40
the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that *they* should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, re- 41
joicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, 42
they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

1—7. *Murmuring about the distribution of the common fund. Measures for allaying it.*

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was 6

lest haply ye be found, &c.] The clause depends on, "Take heed to yourselves..." (*v.* 35).

40. *and when they had called the apostles*] i.e. back again to the judgment-hall.

and beaten them] As the guilty parties in the controversy (see Deut. xxv. 1—3).

41. *worthy to suffer shame*] The Apostles count as their glory what the world would count as shame, cp. Gal. vi. 14, "God forbid that I should *glory* save in the *cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ." This figure of speech (called oxymoron, and consisting in the effective contrast of words apparently opposite) is common in the New Testament. Cp. 2 Cor. vi. 8—10.

for his name] Read with the best authorities, *for* the Name. That name of which St Peter had said (iv. 12), "There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

42. *And daily in the temple, and in every house*] Read, as in ii. 46, *in the temple and at home.* These are their two fields of labour, in the Temple, while they may be there, and then in their own houses; and it may be that some would not be able to go to the Temple, yet these at home were teachers still.

Jesus Christ] Better, *Jesus the Christ*, i.e. the anointed, the Messiah. This is *the Name* of *v.* 41.

VI. 1—7. MURMURING ABOUT THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE COMMON FUND. MEASURES FOR ALLAYING IT.

By the confession of the high-priest himself (Acts v. 28) Jerusalem was now filled with the teaching of the Christians, and thus the first step was accomplished in the course which Christ had ordained (i. 8) for the publication of the Gospel. Now, therefore, the historian of the Church's progress turns to deal with other events and different persons, because he has to tell of a persecution which caused Christian missionaries to go forth for the next stage of the work, the spread of the faith through Judæa and Samaria (viii. 1). The means which God employed for this end are not such as an inventor in the second century would have been

multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the

likely to hit upon, nor such as any writer who merely desired to magnify the Apostles would have adopted. A system for the more effectual relief of the widows among the congregation is devised, and an outburst of popular rage, causing the death of one of the dispensers of the relief-funds, also disperses the greater part of the Church of Jerusalem. A person who was free to choose (as an inventor would have been) would scarcely have selected one of the seven deacons for the first Christian martyr, and have left the Apostles out of sight, while giving the history of Stephen. The choice of such a writer would have surely fallen upon one of the twelve to be the first to die for the faith.

1. *And in those days*] Better, these. The narrative which follows is closely connected with v. 14, where it is said, "believers were added to the Lord, *multitudes* both of men and women."

when the number of the disciples was multiplied] Better, *was multiplying*. The participle is in the present tense, and its meaning should be fully expressed. It was at the time when this sudden increase was in progress that the difficulty arose which led to the murmuring. The numbers of the society increased so rapidly that the superintendence of the relief of the needy claimed the full devotion of the Apostles, and proved in the end more than they could discharge.

there arose a murmuring] By the readiness with which the Apostles took measures to remedy what was complained of, we may infer that there had been shewn sufficient cause for complaint. This may easily have come to pass without any fault on the part of the twelve, simply from the sudden growth of the number of Christians.

of the Grecians against the Hebrews] The first-named, who are called in the original *Hellenistæ*, were either Jews who had been born in countries where Greek was the vernacular, and so did not speak Hebrew, nor join in the Hebrew services of the Jews of the Holy Land, but had synagogues of their own in Jerusalem, or else they were proselytes. In either case they had embraced Christianity as Jews, for as yet the Gospel had been preached to Jews only. That provision was made for a Greek service for the foreign Jews, we may see from T. Jerus. *Sotah* VII. 1 (Gemara), "Rabbi Levi, the son of Hithah, went to Cæsarea, and heard the voice of the people saying the *Shema* (the name given to the Hebrew confession 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, Jehovah is one,' from its first word) in Hellenistic. He desired to prevent them. Rabbi Jose heard of it and was angry, and said, Thus I say, that whosoever does not know how to read it correctly in Hebrew shall not read it at all [in that language], but does his duty [by reading it] in any language which he knows how to speak."

the Hebrews] These were the born Jews who lived in the Holy Land and spoke the language which the New Testament calls Hebrew.

because their widows were neglected] The very persons who, speaking a foreign language and being desolate, would be likely to be overlooked amid the increased number of applications for help.

daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude 2
of the disciples unto *them*, and said, It is not reason that
we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Where- 3
fore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest

in the daily ministration] The original word is the same as that which in xi. 29 is rendered *relief*, and from the class of persons on whose behalf the complaint was made it is clear that it bears the same sense here. This word *diakonia* has, however, caused the name of *deacons* to be attached to these officers, whose appointment was at first made that they might have care of and distribute the funds contributed by the rich members for the relief of the needy. We can nevertheless see from St Stephen's work that the labours of the seven were not confined to these duties alone, for he is a mighty preacher and endued with gifts of the Holy Ghost in the same way as the Apostles. It is deserving of notice that, before we find any special arrangements made for what we now understand by "divine service," the regulation of the relief of those in need had become so engrossing a part of the duty of the twelve as to have thrust aside in some degree the prayers and ministration of the word, which were especially their charge. In these early days they appear to have acted according to St James' teaching (i. 27), "Pure religion (*θρησκεία*) and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

2. *Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them*] They found that there was cause for the complaint, and at once prepared to provide a remedy. By "the multitude of the disciples" we are not to suppose that an attempt was made to gather every one who in Jerusalem called himself a Christian, but that a large and special meeting was convened, before which the Apostles laid their plan. The funds had been given by various persons, and were for the common relief; it was therefore fit that a change in the distributors should be considered in common.

and said, It is not reason] The word properly means *pleasing*, and the idea meant to be conveyed is that it was not *meet* that the Apostles should leave the higher functions to which they had been specially appointed, and spend their whole time in the business duties to which the present emergency had given rise.

that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables] Better, "forsake the word." The verb in the original is a strong form, and indicates that the whole time of the twelve was being spent on this disbursement.

By *tables* is meant the bench or counter at which the money was distributed. Both in Hebrew and Greek *bankers* are "tablers." Cf. "the *tables* of the moneychangers" (Matt. xxi. 12).

The word for *serve* is *diakonein*, akin to the noun in the previous verse.

3. *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you*] The word *wherefore* should according to the best MSS. be *but*, and the end of the sentence should be "*from* among you."

report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may
4 appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves
5 continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And
the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose
Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and

seven men of honest report] Lit. *attested*, i.e. well reported of (as 1 Tim. v. 10). It is rendered "of good report" below (x. 22).

The number *seven* was no doubt fixed on because that was the number of persons chosen to manage public business in Jewish towns. See Mishna *Megillah* III. 1, "The men of the city who dispose of city market-places may buy with the price thereof a synagogue, or if they sell a synagogue, they may buy an ark (to keep the Law in), or if they sell an ark, they may buy wrappers (the ornamental and costly covers in which the Law was rolled) for the Law, and if they sell these wrappers they may buy books (i.e. the Prophets and the Hagiographa), and if they sell books they may buy a copy of the Torah, but if they have sold a Torah they may not buy books," and so on in the contrary order.

On this ordinance it is said, T. B. *Megillah* 26 a, "Raba says, This is only applicable when *the seven good men of the city* sell anything in the presence of the men of the city."

full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom] The best MSS. omit *holy*. Read, "full of the Spirit, &c." They were to be approved both by God and man. Men could judge of their wisdom, and God had in these days shed forth the Spirit on many.

whom we may appoint over this business] While leaving to the assembled brethren the selection of the men, the Apostles keep some control still with themselves. They certainly would judge best concerning the spiritual fitness of the chosen seven.

4. *But we will give ourselves continually*] The Greek word is used several times in describing the earnest conduct of the disciples. Thus (i. 14) "these all *continued* with one accord in prayer," and (ii. 42) "they *continued stedfastly* in the Apostles' doctrine." So ii. 46, and St Paul employs it (Rom. xii. 12), "*continuing instant* in prayer."

to prayer, and to the ministry of the word] Which explains what is meant by "leave the word of God" in *v.* 2. Here again we have the word *diakonia* to describe the Apostle's duty of preaching and teaching. Each office was, if duly performed, a part of the service which was laid upon the whole Church. Cp. Milton, Sonnet XIX. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

5. *And the saying pleased the whole multitude*] There was clearly no thought of neglecting any, and when the oversight was known and a remedy proposed all were rejoiced thereat.

and they chose Stephen, &c.] If we may conclude about the men who were chosen from the names they bear, every one of the seven was of the Grecians. The names are all Greek, and such a choice marks the desire of all the Church to put an end to every cause of complaint, and as it were to say, We know that as we should not wilfully overlook

Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set 6
before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid
their hands on them. And the word of God increased; 7
and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem
greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient
to the faith.

8—15. *Of Stephen's Preaching, Arrest and Accusation.*

And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders 8

a Greek who was in need, so no Greek Christian would of purpose neglect a Hebrew widow, and to shew our trust we choose Greeks to have the whole oversight of this duty.

Of the men who were chosen, except Stephen, we hear in future only of Philip (viii. 5) as a preacher in Samaria, and he is supposed to be and probably is the same person as "Philip the evangelist" mentioned xxi. 8.

There is a tradition that Nicolas was the originator of that error of the Nicolaitanes against which St John speaks in such condemnatory terms in the Apocalypse (Rev. ii. 6, 15). But even in the early ages of the Church there was much uncertainty about this matter, and there is no trustworthy evidence for connecting this Nicolas with the licentious body whom St John condemns. (See Burton's *Eccl. Hist.* p. 364.)

Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch] Some have thought that, from this description of Nicolas, he was the only proselyte among the seven, but the distinction of such a special addition may have been given to him because he came from Antioch, while the other six were of Jerusalem.

6. *whom they set before the apostles*] That they might confirm, as they had proposed to do, the selection made by the whole congregation.

they laid their hands on them] As a solemn dedication of them to the work for which they had been chosen. Cf. Numb. xxvii. 18, 23.

7. *And the word of God increased*] i.e. was more widely spread now that the Apostles were freed from secular cares, and left to give themselves unto the ministry of the word. (Cp. for the expression xii. 24, xix. 20.)

a great company of the priests] To these men the sacrifice would be greater than to the ordinary Israelite, for they would experience the fullest weight of the hatred against the Christians, and would lose their status and support, as well as their friends. This is no doubt the reason why such special mention is made of them.

were obedient to the faith] As faith in Christ was the first demand made from those who desired to enter the new communion, it is easy to understand how the Christian religion gained from the earliest times the name of "the Faith." Cf. xiii. 8, xiv. 22, xvi. 5, xxiv. 24.

9 and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them

8—15. Of Stephen's Preaching, Arrest and Accusation.

8. *And Stephen, full of faith*] The best MSS. read *grace.*

and power] i. e. of working miracles. He at least among the seven appears almost as largely gifted by the Holy Ghost, as were the twelve.

9. *Then there arose certain*] It is better to render the connecting particle *But*, it is no note of time.

of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines] Lit. *of them that were of the synagogue called*, &c. The number of synagogues in Jerusalem was very great. The *Libertines* were most likely the children of some Jews who had been carried captive to Rome by Pompey (B.C. 63), and had been made freedmen (*libertini*) by their captors, and after their return to Jerusalem had formed one congregation and used one synagogue specially. There is an interesting illustration of this severance of congregations among the Jews from a like cause in the description of the modern Jewish communities in Malabar and Cochin. It is in a MS. in the Cambridge University Library (Oo. I. 47) which was written in 1781. "At this time are found in their dwelling-places about forty white householders, and in all the other places are black Jews found, and their forefathers *were the slaves* of the white Jews, and now the black Jews as found in all the places are about five hundred householders, and they have ten synagogues while the white Jews have only one. And the white Jews dwell all together and their ritual is distinct from that of the black Jews, and they will not count them [the black Jews] among the ten [necessary for forming a congregation] except a few families of them; but if any of the white Jews go to their [the black Jews'] synagogues, they will admit him as one of the ten."

and Cyrenians] Read, *and of the Cyrenians.* On the Jews in Cyrene see ii. 10 note.

and Alexandrians] Read, *and of the Alexandrians.* There were in Christ's time, and had been long before, as we learn from the account of the Septuagint translation, Jews resident in Alexandria. In the Talmud we are told that they were very numerous. Thus T. B. *Succah* 51 b it is said, "Rabbi Jehudah said: He that hath not seen the amphitheatre at Alexandria (apparently used for the Jewish worship) in Egypt has not seen the glory of Israel. They say it was like a great Basilica with gallery above gallery. Sometimes there were in it double the number of those who went out from Egypt, and there were in it seventy-one seats of gold corresponding to the seventy-one members of the great Sanhedrin, each one of them worth not less than twenty-one myriads of talents of gold, and there was a platform of wood in the midst thereof, and the minister of the synagogue stood upon it with flags in his hand, and when the time [in the service] came that they should answer Amen, then he waved with the flag and all the people answered Amen." In spite of the exaggeration of the numbers in this story we may be certain from it that there was a very large Jewish population in Alexandria,

of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they 10
were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which
he spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have 11
heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and
against God. And they stirred up the people, and the 12
elders, and the scribes, and came upon *him*, and caught
him, and brought *him* to the council, and set up false wit- 13

and that they were likely to have a separate synagogue in Jerusalem. For another portion of this story see note on xviii. 3.

and of them of Cilicia] Cilicia was at the S.E. corner of Asia Minor. One of its principal towns was Tarsus, the birthplace of St Paul, and there were no doubt many other Jews there, descendants of those Jews whom Antiochus the Great introduced into Asia Minor (Joseph. *Antiq.* XII. 3. 4), two thousand families of whom he placed there as well disposed guardians of the country.

and of Asia] See note on ii. 9.

disputing with Stephen] The original word is used frequently of the captious questionings of the Pharisees (Mark viii. 11), and the scribes (Mark ix. 14), with Jesus and His disciples.

11. *Then they suborned men*] Suborn = to provide, but nearly always used in a bad sense. *Subornation* of perjury is the legal phrase for procuring a person who will take a false oath.

which said, &c.] The charge here laid against Stephen is afterwards defined. Blasphemous words against Moses and against God was the construction which these witnesses put upon language which had probably been uttered by Stephen in the same way as Christ had said (John iv. 21), "The time cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father."

12. *And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes*] of whom the latter two classes had already been exasperated against the Apostles. And now that it was told them that the glory of the Temple was spoken against, the common people would be readily roused, for the Temple was the object of great admiration and pride, as we can see from the words of Christ's disciples (Matt. xxiv. 1).

and came upon him] As the scribes and Pharisees upon Jesus in the Temple (Luke xx. 1).

and caught him, and brought him to the council] A fit prelude to their still more violent proceedings after Stephen's defence was ended (vii. 57).

13. *and set up false witnesses which said*] Their falseness consists in the perverted turn which they gave to the words of Stephen. Though we have no words of his hitherto recorded, we can see from the character of his defence in the next chapter that he must have been heard to declare that the worship of God was no longer to be restricted as it had been to the Temple at Jerusalem. And just as in the accusation of Christ (Matt. xxvi. 61) the witnesses (called, as here, false, and for a like reason) perverted a saying of Jesus, "Destroy this temple and in three

nesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphe-
14 mous words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which
15 Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

1—53. *Stephen's Defence.*

7 Then said the high priest, Are these *things* so? And he
2

days I will raise it up," which St John (ii. 21) explains, into "I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days," so the words of Stephen which spake of a worship now "to be bound to no fixed spot, and fettered by no inflexible externality" (Zeller), were twisted into blasphemy against the Temple and the law, called in *v.* 11 blasphemy against Moses and against God; and by the use of these two phrases as equivalent the one to the other, they shew us how God and Moses meant for them no more than their Temple and its ritual.

This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words] The best authorities omit *blasphemous*.

14. *for we have heard him say*] No doubt there was some handle afforded by Stephen's words for their statement.

that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place] What the tenor of Stephen's language must have been may be gathered from vii. 48, "The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands." And to Jewish people at this time to sever worship from Jerusalem was the same thing as to destroy the Temple. The attempt which has been made to shew that the charge against Stephen is merely a reproduction of that made against Jesus is seen to be futile when we observe that in Stephen's case the witnesses know nothing of "the raising up again of the temple," and that Stephen himself, by not contradicting but explaining their accusation, in his defence points out that their statement had a widely different origin from that which gave cause to the accusation of Jesus.

15. *And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him*] As they would naturally in expectation of what he was about to say in his defence.

saw his face as it had been the face of an angel] Either because of the calm dignity which Stephen's natural look displayed; he was calm and undisturbed, confident in his good cause and supported by the Spirit: or as his gaze soon afterwards (vii. 56) beheld the open heavens and the glory of Christ enthroned on high, it may be that the sense in this verse is also supernatural, and that the face of Stephen was already illumined with the radiancy of the new Jerusalem.

For the expression cp. vii. 20 note.

VII. 1—53. Stephen's Defence.

1. *Then said the high priest, Are these things so?*] Read, *And the*

said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get 3

high priest said, &c. Thus he called upon Stephen to answer the charges laid against him.

2. *And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken*] Omit *men*. Cp. i. 16, note. For an account of the argument in Stephen's speech and its connection with the whole design of the writer of the Acts, see *Introduction* pp. ix. x.

The God of glory] A not very common expression (see Ps. xxix. 3), but probably chosen designedly as an introduction to this discourse, which deals with the several stages of God's manifestation of Himself. The term is applied (John i. 14) to the incarnate Word; "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia] The ancestral home of Abraham is called "Ur of the Chaldees" (Gen. xi. 31), and it is said (Josh. xxiv. 2, 3) to have been "on the other side of the flood," i.e. beyond the Euphrates. It is not possible to determine the site of Ur, but the most probable opinion seems to be that which places it at Edessa, now called *Orfah*, and said to have been called *Orrha* in early times. If this were the place the journey thence to Charran (O. T. Haran), i.e. *Carrhæ*, would not have been so very formidable for the father of the patriarch to undertake, and at Charran Terah remained till he died (Gen. xi. 32). Abraham when without his father could remove with greater ease to the distant Canaan.

our father Abraham] If Stephen were merely a proselyte he might yet use this expression, for Abraham is regarded as the father of proselytes. On Genesis xii. 5, "The souls which they had gotten [Heb. *made*] in Haran," the Targum of Onkelos explains "The souls which they (Abraham and his family) had brought to serve the Law," i.e. made them proselytes: and on the same text *Berashith Rabbah*, par. 39, has "Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Zimra, said: If all the men in the world were to combine to create even a single gnat, they could not infuse into it a soul; and thou sayest, 'The souls which they *made*.' But these are the proselytes whom they brought in. Yet, if so, why does it say they *made* them? This is to teach thee that when anybody brings near the stranger, and makes him a proselyte, it is as good as if he had created him."

before he dwelt in Charran] The Greek verb rendered dwelt is one which implies a settled residence, though it conveys no idea of permanent abode. It is used (Matt. ii. 23) of Joseph and Mary *dwelling* at Nazareth, and (Matt. iv. 13) of Christ's less fixed *dwelling* in Capernaum.

3. *and said unto him*] It does not appear from the narrative in Genesis whether there had been some Divine communication which caused the first removal from Ur to Haran. We are only told (xi. 31) that Terah took his family and removed, but as it is there added "to go into the land of Canaan," and as in the following chapter, where God's order to remove is expressly given (xii. 1), it is also said that "they went forth to go into the land of Canaan," we may conclude that the first re-

thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and
4 come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then
came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in
Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he
5 removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And
he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to

moval had been enjoined by God, and that it was only on account of Terah's age that the country for which they set forth was not reached at once. In Gen. xv. 7 God says "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees," language which implies a command given for the first removal. Cp. Neh. ix. 7. Gen. xii. 1 should be rendered "Now the Lord *said* unto Abram," not "had said," as A.V.

Get thee out of thy country [land], *and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee*] The word for *land* is the same in both clauses. In Gen. xii. 1 the words "and from thy father's house" are added after "kindred." The destination of the emigrants was known before they started from Ur.

4. *Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran*] The Chaldæans were the people of that country which had Babylon for its capital. The extent of the country signified by "the land of the Chaldæans" must have varied at different periods.

when his father was dead] According to the order of the narrative in Genesis, this seems to be so, but when the ages of Terah and Abraham are noticed, it appears that Abraham left Haran before his father's death. For Terah was 70 years old when Abraham was born (Gen. xi. 26), and Abraham was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran (Gen. xii. 4), so that of Terah's 205 years there were yet (205 – 145) = 60 years unexpired when his son went away. On this Jewish literature has the explanation (*Midrash Rabbah* on Genesis, cap. 39) that God absolved Abraham from the care of his father, and yet, that Abraham's departure from Terah should not lead others to claim the same relaxation of a commandment for themselves, Terah's death is noticed in Holy Writ before Abraham's departure, and it is also added, to explain the mention of *death*, that "the wicked (and among them Terah is reckoned, see Josh. xxiv. 2) are called dead while they are alive."

he removed him] i.e. God caused him to migrate. There is a slight vagueness in the English, but none in the Greek.

5. *And he gave him none inheritance in it*] The first settlement of Abraham in Canaan is said (Gen. xii. 6) to have been at the place of Sichem [Shechem] at the plain [rather, *oak*] of Moreh. He next dwelt on the east of Bethel, and in both these places he probably purchased land, for he built an altar at each; and on returning from Egypt (xiii. 3) he came "to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai," which he hardly could have done unless the land had been his own, for he "was very rich in cattle."

no, not so much as to set his foot on] For the land, when God gave it, would be held in very different manner from that in which Abraham held the land which he had bought or hired.

set his foot on: yet he promised that *he* would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. And God spake on this wise, That his 6
seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years. And the nation to 7
whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. And he gave him the covenant of cir- 8

yet he promised] Better, *and* he promised. The conjunction is the ordinary copulative.

that he would give it to him for a possession] More literally, *in possession*. The promise "unto thy seed will I give this land" was first made (Gen. xii. 7) when Abraham was at the place of Shechem, and in its greater fulness when he returned from Egypt (xiii. 15, 16).

when as yet he had no child] We cannot learn from Holy Writ how long a time Abraham lived after the promise before Isaac was born, but we can see that it was a long period, for when he went down to Egypt Sarah was a fair woman in the prime of her beauty (Gen. xii. 14), and she was "waxed old" (xviii. 12) before her son was born.

6. *And God spake on this wise*] The words are substantially those which we find in Gen. xv. 13, 14.

four hundred years] This number agrees with the number stated in Genesis; but in Exod. xii. 40, and also by St Paul (Gal. iii. 17), the time is said to have been *four hundred and thirty* years. The period is reckoned so as to include part of the lives of the patriarchs in Canaan, and the variation may be accounted for if one number dates back to the first call, and the second only to the departure from Haran; or the one may be reckoned from the time of the covenant of circumcision, and the other from the promise of the land. Or it may be that one is merely a round number and the other an attempt at greater exactness. We can come to no certain conclusion in the matter, but we can see that both numbers were current among the Jews, for Josephus (*Ant.* II. 15. 2) makes the time 430 years, and elsewhere (*Ant.* II. 9. 1, and *Bell. Jud.* V. 9. 4) 400 years.

7. *after that shall they come forth*] The first prophecy (Gen. xv. 14) of this Exodus adds "with great substance."

and serve me in this place] These words are not in the promise given to Abraham, but are taken from Exod. iii. 12, where the original promise is repeated and sent to the Israelites through Moses, and the place meant in that verse is Sinai, called there Horeb, the mountain of God. Stephen in his speech combines the two that he may describe the promise in its fulness, and he mentions the worship of God in that place, because the one great object of his address is to demonstrate that what is laid to his charge concerning the highest worship of God being no longer restricted to the Temple and Jerusalem, is nothing more than they were taught by a study of their own history.

cumcision: and so *Abraham* begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob; and Jacob *begat* 9 the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, moved with envy, 10 sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he 11 made him governor over Egypt and all his house. Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent 13 out our fathers first. And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was 14 made known unto Pharaoh. Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all his kindred, threescore and

8. *the covenant of circumcision*] Given the year before Isaac was born (Gen. xvii. 21).

9. *the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph*] The same word is used (xvii. 5) of the hostile feelings of the Jews at Thessalonica against Paul and Silas. In the history (Gen. xxxvii. 4, 5) it is said "his brethren hated him," and (xxxvii. 11) "they envied him."

sold Joseph into Egypt] See Gen. xxxvii. 28 for the way in which this was done.

but God was with him] Read, and God, &c. The conjunction is *καί*. The statement is from Gen. xxxix. 2, 21, 23, and is used by Stephen here to give point to his argument that God's presence is not circumscribed, and so neither should His worship be tied to place.

10. For the history see Genesis xxxix.—xli.

11. *Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan*, &c.] The oldest MSS. omit "the land of."

our fathers found no sustenance] The noun in Greek is generally used of food for cattle rather than men. See LXX. Gen. xxiv. 25, 32, &c. But we must suppose that, though in the history the sufferings of the people are most noticed, the famine also affected the supplies of cattle-food, and the one word is used to embrace all.

12. *he sent out our fathers first*] i.e. before he himself went away from Canaan into Egypt.

13. *was made known*] The original is not the same in the two clauses for this expression. Read in the latter "Joseph's kindred *became known*," &c.

14. *threescore and fifteen souls*] This number is taken from the LXX. In the Hebrew (Gen. xlvi. 8—27) the number is but seventy including Jacob himself. The five additional names given in the LXX. are Machir the son and Galaad the grandson of Manasseh, and the two sons of Ephraim, Taam and Soutalaam, with Soutalaam's son, Edom. So in Exodus i. 5 the Hebrew has 70, and the LXX. 75. There were many traditions current on this subject, and the Rabbis notice too that

fifteen souls. So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, 15
he, and our fathers, and were carried over into Sychem, and 16

69 persons (they exclude Jacob) are reckoned for 70 in the account given Gen. xlvi. In the *Midrash Shemuel*, c. 32, there are various suggestions thrown out. First it is said the one wanting was Jochebed, who became wife of Amram and mother of Moses, for it is mentioned (Numb. xxvi. 59) that she was a daughter of Levi born in Egypt, and the tradition is that she was born "between the walls," i. e. just as the people were entering Egypt, and so she is to be counted in the number. Another tradition is attached to Gen. xlvi. 23, "The sons of Dan, Hushim." As the last word is a plural form, and *sons* are spoken of in the verse, therefore it is thought that there were two Hushim, an elder and a younger. Also (T. B. *Baba Bathra* 123 a *ad fin.*) there is mentioned the tradition that there was a twin with Dinah. We may thus see that there were traditions current which probably were well known to the translators of the LXX., and gave rise to their number. They however are not consistent, for in Deuteronomy (x. 22) they give 70 as the number which went down into Egypt. Stephen, as was to be expected from the other quotations in this book, and also because he was a Grecian Jew, follows the LXX.

15. *So Jacob went down into Egypt*] Now the whole race whom God had chosen to Himself was in Egypt, away from the land of promise, and remained there for a long period, yet God was with them in their exile, and His worship was preserved for the whole time. This seems the point which Stephen desires to emphasize by so frequent a repetition of the words "into Egypt."

and died, he, and our fathers] Better, *and he died, himself, and our fathers*. Of the transportation of the bodies of the patriarchs to Canaan we have no record in Holy Writ. Josephus (*Antiq.* II. 8. 2) says "the posterity and sons of these men, after some time, carried their bodies and buried them at Hebron." In the discussion of Exodus xiii. 19, *Carry up my bones away hence with you*, it is said (*Mechilta*, ed. Weiss, 1865, Vienna, 8vo p. 30) that the bodies of the patriarchs were carried out of Egypt with the returning Israelites, and it is argued that this is implied in the expression *with you*, which Moses quotes as uttered by Joseph, who must have known that his brethren to whom he was speaking would all be dead before the Exodus. Therefore *with you* could only be used if their bodies were to be transported as well as his own.

16. *and were carried over into Sychem*, &c.] This Sychem is the Old Test. *Shechem*. The oldest authorities give for the latter part of the verse "*of the sons of Emmor* in *Shechem*."

The statement in this verse appears incapable of being reconciled with the record of the Old Testament. There we find (Gen. xlix. 30) that Abraham bought the field and cave of Machpelah, which is before Mamre (i. e. Hebron), from Ephron the Hittite. This is there spoken of as the general burial-place of the family; there were buried Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob's wife Leah. And of Jacob we read (Gen. xxxiii. 19), "he bought a parcel of a field where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father."

laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of
17 money of the sons of Emmor the *father* of Sychem. But
when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had
sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in
18 Egypt, till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.
19 The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated

We are not told that this was for a burial-place, and it is rather to be judged that it was not so, because it is added "he erected there an altar." Moreover it is in Machpelah that Jacob desires to be buried (Gen. xlvii. 30, xlix. 30) and is buried (l. 13). We have seen (note on *v.* 5) that "the place of Shechem" was one of the resting-places of Abraham when he came first into Canaan, and that probably he bought a possession there, for he built an altar. The bones of Joseph were laid in Shechem (Josh. xxiv. 32). There were two burial-places connected with the patriarchal families. In the report of Stephen's speech we find that Abraham is said to have bought what Jacob really purchased, but there may also have been land purchased by Abraham "in the place of Shechem." We have only to suppose that in his speech Stephen, speaking of the burial of the whole family, mentioned, in accordance with the tradition of Josephus, the burial of the fathers in Hebron, which Abraham bought, and noticed the laying of Joseph's bones at Shechem which Jacob bought, and that into the report of what he said a confusion has been introduced by the insertion of Abraham's name for Jacob's in the abbreviated narrative. We have pointed out in several places that the speeches recorded can be no more than abstracts of what was said, and the degree of inaccuracy here apparent might readily be imported in the formation of such an abstract, and yet the original speech have correctly reported all the traditions.

Stephen dwells on "Shechem" in the same way as before he had dwelt on "Egypt," to mark that in the ancient days other places were held in reverence by the chosen people, and they served God there, though at the time when he was speaking Shechem was the home of their enemies the Samaritans.

17. *But when* [as] *the time of the promise drew nigh*] i. e. for its fulfilment. The fathers "all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off" (Heb. xi. 13).

which God had sworn, &c.] The oldest authorities give **had vouchsafed** (ὡμολόγησεν). The same word is used (Matt. xiv. 7) of the promise made by Herod to the daughter of Herodias.

the people grew and multiplied in Egypt] God blessed them there. (See Exod. i. 7, 12.) The number of those who came out of Egypt (Exod. xii. 37) was "six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children."

18. *till another king arose, which knew not Joseph*] The oldest authorities have, *till there arose another king* **over Egypt**, &c.

19. *The same dealt subtilly with our kindred* [race] The word is from the LXX. (Exod. i. 10), "Let us deal wisely (i.e. craftily) with them" are the words of the new king.

our fathers, so that *they* cast out their young children, to the end *they* might not live. In which time Moses was born, 20
and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's
house three months: and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's 21
daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.
And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, 22
and was mighty in words and in deeds. And when he was 23
full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his

and evil entreated our fathers] Beside the hard tasks put upon the people according to the record in Exodus, Josephus adds (*Antiq.* II. 9. 1) that the Egyptians "made them to cut a great many channels for the river, and set them to build pyramids, forced them to learn all sorts of mechanical arts and to accustom themselves to hard labour."

so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live] Better, *in causing their young children to be cast out*, &c. The words are rather a description of what the Egyptian king did in his tyranny (Exod. i. 22), than (as A. V.) of what the Israelites were driven to by their despair.

20. *In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair*] The last phrase is literally "fair unto (i. e. in the sight of) God." This is a Hebrew mode of expressing a high degree of any quality. Thus (Jonah iii. 3) "Nineveh was an exceeding great city," is "a city great unto God." Similar instances are found, Gen. x. 9, xxiii. 6, xxx. 8, &c. In the *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer*, c. 48, we have "The parents of Moses saw his face as [that of] an angel of God."

and [he was] *nourished up in his father's house three months*] Modern English would omit *up* in this sentence.

21. *nourished him for her own son*] Jewish tradition says that the king had no son, and so Moses was designed by the king's daughter to succeed to the kingdom. Josephus (*Antiq.* II. 9. 7), where she speaks of him as "a *child of a divine form* and generous mind."

22. *And Moses was learned* [instructed] *in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*] As was to be expected if he were designed for the kingdom. The wisdom on which the Jewish traditions most dwell is the power of magic, and such knowledge as Pharaoh's wise men are represented as having in the book of Exodus.

and was mighty in [his] *words and in deeds*] The same traditions tell of Moses as a great captain among the Egyptians, and as leading them to victory against the Ethiopians (Josephus, II. 10. 2).

23. *And when he was full forty years old*] Better, *But when he was well-nigh forty years old.* The verb in the original intimates that the forty years were just being completed. For the fixing of this time we have no authority in the Old Testament. We learn thence that Moses was eighty years old when he was sent to speak before Pharaoh for the deliverance of the Israelites (Exod. vii. 7), and that he was a hundred and twenty years old when he died (Deut. xxxiv. 7). In *Midrash Tanchuma* on Exodus ii. 6, we are told "Moses was in the

24 brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one *of them*
suffer wrong, he defended *him*, and avenged him that was
25 oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his
brethren would have understood how that God by his hand
26 would deliver them: but they understood not. And the
next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and
would have set them at one *again*, saying, Sirs, ye are bre-
27 thren; why do ye wrong one to another? But he that did
his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made
28 thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as
29 thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses at
this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where

palace of Pharaoh twenty years, but some say *forty* years, and forty years in Midian, and forty years in the wilderness." Stephen's words agree with this tradition.

it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel] The verb in the original, which is here rendered *visit*, is the same as in Luke vii. 16, "God hath visited his people," and means to look upon (generally with kindness, James i. 27), and this was the old sense of the English *visit*. Cf. Shaks. *Rich. II.* i. 3. 275:

"All places that the eye of heaven *visits*."

24. *and smote the Egyptian*] i. e. killed him. See Exod. ii. 12.

25. *for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them*] Better, **and** *he supposed that his brethren* **understood** *how that God by his hand* **was giving them deliverance.** There is no condition in the sentence. The traditions, in the atmosphere of which Stephen moved, represent the death of the Egyptian as no mere ordinary killing by superior strength, but as brought about by mysterious Divine power, which Moses feeling within himself expected his kindred to recognize.

26. *And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove*] i. e. to "two men of the Hebrews" (Exod. ii. 13). This quotation from Exodus is but a forcible way of representing what up to this point had been left unexplained, that the persons contending in this second case were Israelites.

28. *Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?*] For *didst* read **killedst.** The verb is repeated in the original.

29. *Then* [**And**] *fled Moses at this saying*] Josephus (*Antiq.* II. 11. 1) makes no mention of this reason for the flight of Moses, but says that the Egyptians were jealous of him, and told the king "that he would raise a sedition, and bring innovations" into the land. In consequence of the plots against him because of these suspicions Moses fled away secretly.

and was a stranger in the land of Madian] Lit. "*and became a sojourner*," &c. Madian is the Greek form for *Midian*, which for

he begat two sons. And when forty years were expired, 30
there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an
angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When 31
Moses saw *it*, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew
near to behold *it*, the voice of the Lord came unto him,
saying, I *am* the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, 32
and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then
Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the 33
Lord to him, Put off *thy* shoes from thy feet: for the place
where thou standest is holy ground. I have seen, I have 34
seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I
have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver
them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. This 35
Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler
and a judge? the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a
deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him

clearness' sake would be better here. By "the land of Midian," which is only found in Scripture history, is probably meant the peninsula on which Mount Sinai stands (see Exod. iii. 1).

where he begat two sons] Gershom and Eliezer; their mother was Zipporah the daughter of Jethro (Exod. xviii. 2—4).

30. *And when forty years were expired*] Thus making, with the forty years mentioned in *v.* 23, eighty years, the age at which Moses went unto Pharaoh (Exod. vii. 7).

there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord] It is better to conform the New Testament orthography in familiar names to that of the Old, and so write *Sinai*. The oldest authorities omit the words "of the Lord."

31—34. Here we have in substance the history as given in Exodus iii. 2—10.

32. *the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*] The oldest authorities omit "the God" in the second and third places.

34. *I have seen, I have seen*] The Greek is an attempt to imitate an emphatic Hebrew construction, and is literally "having seen, I have seen," which in idiomatic English = "I have surely seen," by which words the Hebrew is rendered (Exod. iii. 7).

35. Stephen here begins to point out how in old time the people had rejected Moses, though he had the witness of God that his commission was Divine, that he may shew his hearers how they are acting in the same manner toward Jesus.

This Moses...the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel] The best MSS. read, *him* hath God sent...with *the hand*, &c. The verb is in the perfect tense in the original, and constitutes the form of Stephen's appeal to history. God, says he, hath

36 in the bush. He brought them out, after that he had shewed
wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red
37 sea, and in the wilderness forty years. This is *that* Moses,
which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall
the Lord your God raise up unto you of your bre-
38 thren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he,
that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel
which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers:

sent back the rejected Moses to be a ruler and deliverer, and he leaves them to draw the conclusion that what God had done in the case of Moses, he would also do in the case of the prophet whom Moses had foretold as to be like himself. Cp. Gal. iv. 23; 1 Tim. ii. 14; Heb. vii. 6.

by the hand of the angel] i. e. with the power. Cp. Acts xi. 21, "The hand of the Lord was with them." And of the angel it is said (Exod. iii. 4) "When *the Lord* saw that he turned aside to see, *God* called unto him," so that the whole expression means, "with the power of God, who appeared to him," &c.

36. *He brought* [led] *them out*] Having God's power with him in all these wanderings.

after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt] The oldest MSS. omit "the land of." Read, *having wrought wonders and signs in Egypt.*

and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years] The Jewish traditions make the plagues sent on the Egyptians at the Red Sea more than those which had been sent to them in Egypt. Thus in the *Mechilta* (ed. Weiss, p. 41) the Egyptians are said to have received *ten* plagues in Egypt, but *fifty* at the Red Sea, because the magicians speak of the afflictions in Egypt (Exod. viii. 19) as "the *finger* of God," while at the Red Sea it is said (Exod. xiv. 31) "And Israel saw that great work [Heb. *hand*] which the Lord did upon the Egyptians."

37. The prophecy is in Deut. xviii. 15, and has been already quoted by St Peter (iii. 22) as referring ultimately to the Messiah. Its quotation to those who had rejected Jesus is the key-note of what is more openly expressed in *v.* 51, "as your fathers did, so do ye."

38. *This is he, that was in the church* [congregation] *in the wilderness*] i. e. with the congregation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai.

with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina [Sinai] As in *v.* 35, the angel is God Himself; just so in *v.* 31 the voice which spake is called "a voice of the Lord."

and with our fathers] Jewish tradition says that the whole world was present at Sinai. Thus *Midrash Rabbah* on Exodus, cap. 28 *ad fin.*: "Whatever the prophets were to utter in prophecy in every generation they received from Mount Sinai," and presently after, commenting on the words of Moses (Deut. xxix. 15), *Him that is not here with us this day*, it is said, "These are the souls which were yet to be created," i. e. to be sent into the world; and to explain (Deut. v. 22) *and he added no*

who received *the* lively oracles to give unto us: to whom 39
our fathers would not obey, but thrust *him* from *them*, and
in their hearts turned *back again* into Egypt, saying unto 40
Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for *as for* this
Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt,
we wot not what is become of him. And they made a 41
calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and
rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God 42
turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven;

more, (on which they found the teaching that all revelation was completely given at Sinai,) they say, "The one voice was divided into seven voices, and these were divided into the seventy tongues," which Jewish tradition held to be the number of the languages of the world.

who received the lively oracles to give unto us] *Who* (i. e. Moses) *received living oracles*, &c. Moses is thus shewn to have been a mediator (see Gal. iii. 19), and thus to have prefigured the mediator of a better covenant (Heb. viii. 6) and of the New Testament (Heb. ix. 15), even Jesus (Heb. xii. 24).

The oracles are called *living*, just as "the word of God" is called *living* [A.V. quick] (Heb. iv. 12), because it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. On this effect cp. St Paul's language concerning the law (Rom. vii. 9), "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." But there is at the same time the other sense in the word, which appears when (John vi. 51) Christ calls Himself "the *living* bread which came down from heaven." For the law pointed onward to Christ, who should lead His people "unto *living* fountains of waters" (Rev. vii. 17). For the thought, cp. 1 Pet. i. 23, "The word of God which *liveth* and abideth for ever."

39. *to whom our fathers would not obey* [be obedient], *but thrust him from them*] For they said (Numb. xiv. 4), "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." This was after the return of the spies, when the people became discontented with the leadership of Moses and Aaron.

and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt] As is told, Exod. xvi. 3, Numb. xi. 4, 5, in which passages the desires of the people are all represented as turned to the good things which they had enjoyed in the land of their slavery.

40. *saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us*] Lit. *which shall go before us*. The passage is almost word for word the report given in Exod. xxxii. 1.

41. *and rejoiced*] It was not the voice of them that shout for the mastery, nor of them that cry for being overcome, but the *noise of them that sing* which Moses (Exod. xxxii. 18) heard when he came down from the mount.

42. *Then God turned*] Read, But. Cp. Josh. xxiv. 20, "If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, then he will *turn* and do you hurt."

as it is written in the book of the prophets, O *ye* house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices *by the space of* forty years in the wilderness?
43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made

and gave them up to worship [serve] *the host of heaven*] God had previously warned them against this kind of idolatry (Deut. iv. 19), but we learn from the records of their historians (2 Kings xvii. 16) and their prophets (Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5) that the warning was given in vain.

as it is written in the book of the prophets] The Hebrews divided their Scriptures into three sections, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa (called the Psalms, Luke xxiv. 44), and each of these parts is looked upon as a special and separate book. The Law comprised the five books of Moses. The earlier prophets were the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: the later prophets were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve which we now call Minor Prophets. The Hagiographa consisted of the following books in the order here given: Psalms (and the expression of Luke xxiv. 44 will be understood because the Psalms stand first in this section), Proverbs, Job, the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther (these five last mentioned were called the five rolls, being written on separate rolls for use at special festival and fast services), Daniel, Ezra (Nehemiah), and Chronicles.

O ye house of Israel, have ye offered, &c.] It is more emphatic to keep the order of the Greek. Read, *Did ye offer unto me slain beasts and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?* The whole passage to the end of *v.* 43 is a quotation from Amos (v. 25—27). The question in this verse is to be answered in the negative, for in their hearts, though they were sacrificing to Jehovah, they had turned back into Egypt, and such service God counts as no service at all.

43. *Yea, ye took up*, &c.] Read, **And** *ye took up*. The conjunction is the ordinary copulative, and the thought is continuous, "Your hearts were after your idols, and ye took up their images," more truly than my ark. In the Hebrew the word for "took up" is that regularly employed for the "bearing" the ark of the covenant.

the tabernacle of Moloch] The Hebrew word which the LXX. have rendered *tabernacle* is not the usual form for that word. There is little doubt that it is intended for a proper name, *Sicuth*.

and the star of your god Remphan [Rephan, the] *figures which ye made to worship them*] This clause differs widely from the Hebrew, which gives, "And Chiun your images, the star of your god which ye made to yourselves." The LXX. seem to have read the words in a different order. *Rephan*, which is by them substituted for *Chiun*, is said to be the Egyptian name for Saturn (see Spencer, *de Leg. Heb.* p. 667), and may have been used by them as an equivalent for the other name which is found nowhere else but in Amos. The whole idea of the passage seems to be that the stars were being worshipped, and so it is an illustration

to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon. Our fathers had the tabernacle of Witness in the 44
wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that *he* should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in 45
with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God

suited for Stephen's argument. "To worship them" is an addition not in the LXX.

and I will carry you away beyond Babylon] The Hebrew of Amos and the LXX. say beyond *Damascus*. But as Babylon was the place most connected in the mind of the Jew with captivity, the alteration in the quotation may be due either to the prominence of such connection in Stephen's mind, or in the thoughts of the reporter of the speech, who thus inadvertently wrote Babylon. At this point Stephen closes the digression which began at the 37th verse, and which is meant to point out that the Jews are doing towards Jesus just what their fathers did to Moses and against God. He now resumes the argument that God's worship was not meant to be always fixed to one place.

44. *Our fathers had the tabernacle of Witness* [of the **testimony**] *in the wilderness*] The name is found first Exod. xxxviii. 21. The ark is also called the *ark of the testimony*, as Exod. xxv. 22, &c., and the name was no doubt given because all the contents of the ark, which was the most sacred part of the Tabernacle fittings, were testimonies to God's rule or to His power exerted for His people. Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, and the tables of the Law were all stored up therein. And this ark above which God made His presence seen was in the wilderness and moving from place to place.

as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, &c.] Better, *even as he had appointed who spake*, &c. For the command see Exod. xxv. 9, 40, xxvi. 30, xxvii. 8.

45. *Which also our fathers that came after*] Better, *having received it after*. For all the generation that came out of Egypt was dead at the entry into Canaan except Caleb and Joshua.

brought in with Jesus [i.e. **Joshua**] It is better here and in Heb. iv 8 to let the Greek orthography give place to the form of the word used in the Old Testament.

into the possession of the Gentiles] The preposition is not *into* but *in*, and the noun does not mean the land possessed by the nations, but the act of the Israelites in taking possession of it for themselves. Read, *when they took possession of the nations*, (lit. *in their taking possession*,) *whom God drave* [thrust] *out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David*. Till this time the Tabernacle existed, and as the history tells was not always in one place in the land of Canaan, and at the time when the first proposal for a permanent Temple is made by David (2 Sam. vii. 2) and approved by Nathan, God forbids the building of it by David. All which goes to strengthen Stephen's argument that the worship should not be fettered to one place.

drave out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of
46 David; who found favour before God, and desired to find
47 a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built
48 him a house. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in
49 temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the
50 place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these *things?*

51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do*

46. *to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob*] referring to Ps. cxxxii. 5, "Until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob." A reading which is largely accepted gives, "for the *house* of Jacob," but in spite of the ancient authority for it, it is so unsuitable to the drift of the argument, that it seems better to conclude that it is an error of the earliest scribes, rather than to accept it in the text.

48. *Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet*] The oldest authorities omit *temples*. We must supply some English word to complete the sense; perhaps *houses*. Stephen allows that in the days of Solomon there seemed to be a more permanent abode appointed for God's worship, but instantly points out that God through His prophet (Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2) had taught that He was not controlled by or confined to any place.

49. *Heaven is my throne*, &c.] The quotation is nearly verbatim from the LXX.

51. *Ye stiffnecked*] A charge often brought against the Jews in the Old Testament, cp. Exod. xxxii. 9, xxxiii. 3, &c., so that it is a very suitable expression when Stephen is declaring that the people of his time were "as their fathers."

and uncircumcised in heart and ears] As the rite of circumcision was the sign of submission to the Jewish religion in its fullest requirements, so the word *uncircumcised* became a synonym for obstinate resistance to what God had revealed, and the phrase in the text consequently signifies "ye who shut your heart and ears against the truth." For this metaphorical application cp. Lev. xxvi. 41; Deut. x. 16; Jer. vi. 10.

It seems very likely that at this part of his discourse Stephen saw that the language he had been using was distasteful to his audience, and therefore he applied to them words which implied how far they were from being God's people though they called themselves Israelites. They were in his eyes as those whom they called "sinners of the Gentiles." (Gal. ii. 15.)

ye do always resist the Holy Ghost] From the days of Moses, whom their fathers would not obey, down to the days of Jesus, whom they had crucified.

ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? 52
and they have slain them which shewed before of the
coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the
betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the 53
disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*.

VII. 54—VIII. 1. *Effect of the Speech. Death of Stephen.*

When they heard these *things*, they were cut to the heart, 54
and they gnashed on him *with their* teeth. But he, being 55

52. *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?*] Better, *did not your fathers persecute?* Cp. the history, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, "They mocked the messengers of God and despised his words and misused his prophets." And Christ (Matt. xxiii. 37) brought the same charge against Jerusalem, "thou that killest the prophets."

the Just One] The same epithet is applied to Jesus by St John (1 John ii. 1), and is found so used in the Acts (iii. 14, xxii. 14).

of whom ye have been [become, even] *now the betrayers*] Thus proving yourselves true children of those who misused the prophets.

53. *who have received*] Better, *ye who received* the Law from Sinai.

by the disposition of angels] Better, *at the ministration of angels.* St Paul (Gal. iii. 19) has the same expression concerning the Law, that it was "ministered by angels." The LXX. have in Deut. xxxiii. 2, speaking of the giving of the Law, "On his right hand were angels," and Josephus (*Antiq.* xv. 5. 3) represents the same tradition, "We have learned from God the most excellent of our doctrines and the most holy part of our Law by angels." So *Pesikta Rabbathi*, par. 21, "There came down with the Holy One to Sinai twenty-two thousand ministering angels like the camp of the Levites."

and have not kept it] Read, *and kept it not.* Stephen here points back along the whole history of the Jews, and shews how the Law, which was intended to lead men to Christ, had not been guarded in its best sense, the spirit having been sacrificed to the letter, and so the result had been that they rejected and slew Him of whom the whole Law was speaking. The Law, given by angels, was the glory of Israel, the perverse use of it had turned to their shame and destruction.

VII. 54—VIII. 1. EFFECT OF THE SPEECH. DEATH OF STEPHEN.

54. *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart*] There is a conjunction in the original which is not expressed in the English. Read, NOW *when*, &c. On the last verb, which is only found here and in v. 33, see note there. It expresses the sort of cutting that would be made by a saw, and its effect is always one of irritation, and at last it came to be synonymous with gnashing the teeth for rage, with which expression it is here combined.

and they gnashed on him with their teeth] More literally, *gnashed their teeth at him.*

full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right
56 hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.
57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their
58 ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him:* and the witnesses laid down

55. *saw the glory of God*] Some visible sign of God's presence such as the Shechinah had been to the Jews of old. See Exod. xvi. 10, xxiv. 17, in the latter of which passages it is described as like devouring fire. It is defined by the Jews as the concentration of God's omnipresence.

and Jesus standing on the right hand of God] i.e. he was permitted to behold Jesus triumphing in the flesh in which He had been crucified. The position of *standing* rather than that of *sitting* as described elsewhere (Matt. xxvi. 64, &c.) may have been to indicate the readiness of Jesus to strengthen and help His martyr.

56. *the Son of man*] This title, which in the Gospels is only used by Christ when speaking of Himself, is here first employed by another, and can fitly be so employed now, for the prophecy which Christ uttered of Himself (Matt. xxvi. 64), "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power," is now fulfilled, and its fulfilment is to be preached to the world.

57. *Then they cried out*] Better, But, &c.

and stopped their ears] Thus shewing that they merited the description given in *v.* 51. The verb signifies, to compress, to hold tight together. On the action thus described cp. T. B. *Kethuboth* 5 b, "Wherefore is the whole ear hard but the flap soft? That if any hear an unbecoming word he may *press up* the flap and shut his ear."

and ran [rushed] *upon him with one accord*] As though he were one convicted of idolatry, in which case (Deut. xiii. 9, 10) "the hand of *all the people*" was to be upon the offender.

58. *and cast him out of the city, and stoned him*] In accordance with the Law (Lev. xxiv. 14) the person to be stoned must be carried without the camp, and to the people of Jerusalem the walls of the city were as the limits of the camp. Though there was much popular excitement exhibited in this proceeding, we are not to think that it was looked upon by those who were actors in it as other than the carrying out of the Law.

There was a place set apart for such punishment. The person to be stoned was placed on an elevation twice the height of a man, from whence with his hands bound he was thrown down, and then a stone as much as two men could carry was rolled down upon him by the witnesses, after which all the people present cast stones upon him.

and the witnesses laid down their clothes] i.e. their loose outer garments, that they might be more ready for the task which they had to discharge. The law which ordained that the first stone should be

their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.
And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, 59
Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and 60
cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their
charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. And 8
Saul was consenting unto his death.

thrown by the witnesses was meant to restrain hasty accusation. Men would only bring an accusation for grave reasons when they knew that their own hand must be first upon the condemned person.

at a young man's feet] Saul was already of such an age that the authorities could entrust him (ix. 2) with the duty of going to Damascus to arrest the Christians in that city. The Greek word is applied to persons up to the age of forty. In the Epistle to Philemon (9) St Paul speaks of himself as *aged*. That Epistle was probably written about A. D. 63, and the death of Stephen took place about A. D. 35, therefore Saul may well have been between 30 and 40 years of age.

whose name was Saul] Lit. *called Saul*. The name is the same as that of the first King of Israel, and signifies "one asked for" (i. e. in prayer). This Saul was also of the tribe of Benjamin, and had come from his home at Tarsus in Cilicia to attend on the lessons of the great teacher Gamaliel (Phil. iii. 5, 6; Acts xxii. 3).

59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God*] The last word is supplied to make the sense clear in English, but from the words which follow it is better to read "the Lord" instead of "God," for it is the Lord Jesus who is invoked.

and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit] i. e. at its departure from my body; which he knew was soon to take place.

60. *And he kneeled down*] in prayer, probably before the stoning had commenced.

Lord, lay not this sin to their charge] i. e. Reckon it not against them. The original word is the same as in Rom. x. 3, "going about to *establish* their own righteousness," as it were to shew a reckoning in their favour. It is to be observed that both the prayers of Stephen are addressed to Jesus as God. The tone of both cannot but bring to the memory the words of Jesus addressed to the Father in His agony, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46), and "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). As Christ had died, so did His servant learn to die.

And when he had said this, he fell asleep] The last verb is the same which is used (Matt. xxvii. 52) of "the saints which slept" and arose at the crucifixion of Jesus.

VIII. 1. *And Saul was consenting unto his death*] i. e. approving of all that was done. We have the same word, Luke xi. 48, "Ye allow (i. e. praise and approve of) the deeds of your fathers." St Paul says of himself (Acts xxii. 20), "When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed I also was standing by and consenting unto his death."

1—4. *Persecution after Stephen's Death.*

And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and
2 Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen *to his burial*, and made great lamentation over him.

VIII. 1—4. PERSECUTION AFTER STEPHEN'S DEATH.

1. *And at that time there was a great persecution*] Better, *And there* arose on that day, &c. The persecution was in immediate succession to the death of Stephen. Having once proceeded to such a length, the rage of the people turned upon the whole Christian body.

against the church which was at Jerusalem] i.e. the congregation which had grown up since the day of Pentecost.

and they were all scattered abroad] Thus the rage of their enemies brought about the dispersion which Christ had foretold (Acts i. 8). By the word *all* we need not understand every member of the Christian body, but only those who had been most active and so were in special danger from the persecution. We find (*v.* 3) that there were many left, both men and women, in the city, whom Saul seized upon as "disciples of the Lord" and carried to prison. Perhaps Ananias who visited Paul at Damascus (ix. 19, 25) may have been among those now scattered abroad, but see ix. 2 note.

throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria] According to the order of extension indicated by Jesus. The teaching of the Apostles must have been with great power to break through the long-standing prejudices of their Jewish converts against the Samaritans.

except the apostles] Jerusalem would of necessity be looked upon as the headquarters of the Christian band. Thither all the wanderers would refer for guidance and help. The twelve therefore must remain at their post, in spite of all the persecution.

2. *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial*] On *devout*, see ii. 5 note.

The verb often means "to prepare a dead body for burial," but in Thuc. VI. 72 it is found exactly as used here.

The Jews paid great attention to funeral rites. Cp. *Midrash Rabbah* on Gen. xlvii. 29 (par. 96), "Deal kindly and truly with me," literally, "Do with me kindness and truth." Is there then a kindness of falsehood, that he says, kindness and truth? How is this? There is a common proverb which says, "Is the son of thy friend dead?" Put on the load (i.e. bear the burden with him). Is thy friend himself dead? Put off the load (his survivors will not requite you for your sympathy). Therefore he says to him, "If thou wilt do me a kindness after my death, that is a kindness of truth." And in all Ashkenazic prayer-books it is said: "These are the works of which a man reaps the interest in this world, and the capital endures in the world to come; the honouring of father and mother, the doing of acts of mercy,...*the bearing forth*

As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into 3
every house, and haling men and women committed *them*
to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went 4
every where preaching the word.

5—13. *Philip's Preaching in Samaria and its effects.*

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and 5
preached Christ unto them. And the people with one 6

the dead, the reconciliation of a man to his neighbour, but the study of the Torah is above them all." Cp. Mishna *Peah* I. 1 for a part of this.

and made great lamentation over him] The word expresses the beating on the breast which is one of the outward expressions of great sorrow. The Hebrew word for mourning (Gen. xxiii. 2; 2 Sam. iii. 31, &c.) has the same sense. It must have needed no little courage at such a time to perform the funeral rites for one who had fallen as Stephen had, by the fury of the whole people.

3. *As for* [But] *Saul, he made havock of the church*] His own words will best describe his action (xxii. 4), "I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women." The same word is used by the LXX. (Ps. lxxx. 13) of the ravages of wild beasts.

entering into every house] i. e. making his search everywhere that none should escape.

and haling men and women] i. e. dragging them forth. We have the word still in the form "to *haul*," and the *halyards* of a ship.

committed them to prison] Because the number of arrests made it impossible that they should all be brought to trial at once.

4. *Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where* [went about] *preaching the word*] In these words we have the general effect of the persecution. One particular history of such preaching is given immediately.

5—13. PHILIP'S PREACHING IN SAMARIA AND ITS EFFECTS.

5. *Then* [And] *Philip*] The second named in the list of the seven deacons (vi. 5). He is only mentioned in this chapter and xxi. 8 where he is called Philip the Evangelist.

went down to the city of Samaria] i. e. the capital city of the district of Samaria. It was at this time called *Sebaste*=Augusta, in honour of Augustus Cæsar (Joseph. *Antiq.* xv. 8. 5).

and preached [proclaimed] *Christ unto them*] Better, the *Christ*. His preaching was that Jesus was the promised Messiah. The verb is not the same as that rendered "preaching" in the previous verse, but is used (Matt. iii. 1, iv. 17) of the commencement of John the Baptist's preaching, and of Christ's. In like manner, Philip goes forth uttering his voice in the new fields of labour.

6. *And the people* [multitudes] *with one accord gave heed*] The original words imply that crowds of the people gave their faith and consent to the new teaching.

accord gave heed unto those *things* which Philip spake,
7 hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean
spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were
possessed *with them:* and many taken with palsies, and *that*
8 *were* lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that
9 city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which
beforetime in the *same* city used sorcery, and bewitched
the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some

hearing and seeing the miracles which he did] Better, *when they heard and saw the signs which he wrought.* They heard what had been done in other places and saw what was done each under his own observation. The miracles are described by that characteristic which they were specially intended to have in this instance. They were to be *signs* that the message which Philip was bringing was from God. The signs here enumerated are such as could leave no doubt in the minds of those who witnessed the cures.

7. *For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them*] There are some variations in the Gk. Text of this clause, but the most authoritative text would give; *For from many of them which had unclean spirits they came out crying with a loud voice.* On unclean spirits cp. v. 16 note.

9. *a certain man, called Simon*] From the Gk. word *magos*=sorcerer or magician, this man is usually spoken of as Simon Magus. According to Justin Martyr (*Apol.* I. 26) he was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria. The history which is given of him after the events mentioned in this chapter describes him as persistently hostile to St Peter and as following that Apostle to Rome to oppose his teaching. But much that is related is of very doubtful authority. He is said to have been deified at Rome, but it seems probable that Justin mistook a tablet, which was discovered in the sixteenth century with an inscription "Semoni Sanco deo fidio" which was erected in honour of the Sabine Hercules, for a record of Divine honours paid to this Simon Magus.

which beforetime in the same city used sorcery] There is no word for "same" in the original. The sorcery which Simon, and men like him, used was probably no more than a greater knowledge of some of the facts of chemistry by which they at first attracted attention and then traded on the credulity of those who came to consult them. From the time of their sojourn in Egypt the Jews had known of such impostors, and in their traditional literature some of the "wisdom" of Moses partakes of this character.

and bewitched [amazed] *the people of Samaria*] The same verb is used (*v.* 13) of the feeling produced in Simon himself by the sight of Philip's miracles, and is there rendered "wondered."

giving out that himself was some great one] The general expectation that some great person was to arise among the Jews dictated the form in which impostors would proclaim themselves and aided them in procuring credence for what they said.

great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to 10
the greatest, saying, This *man* is the great power of God.
And to him they had regard, because that of long time *he* 11
had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed 12
Philip preaching the *things* concerning the kingdom of God,
and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both
men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and 13

10. *This man is the great power of God*] The A. V. translates the *Tex. Rec.*, but the best MSS. give, *This man is the power of God that is called great.* We can see from the language of the N. T. that "powers" was a word current to express *angelic or heavenly influences* (Rom. viii. 38; 1 Pet. iii. 22); and without assuming such a partition of the celestial host as is seen in the later Alexandrine writings we can understand the thought of these Samaritans that in Simon they had an incarnation of Divine power, which deserved the title of great preeminently.

11. *And to him they had regard*] Read, *And they gave heed to him.* This is an instance of that fondness for change of expression which is so marked a feature of the A. V. The word in the original is exactly the same as in the preceding verse.

of long time he had bewitched [amazed] *them with sorceries*] His birthplace was in Samaria, and it is most probable that he had lived there a great part of his life. Tradition (*Clement. Hom.* II. 22) makes him to have been educated in Alexandria, but he is also said to have been a pupil of Dositheus a Gnostic teacher in Samaria, so that he had probably been but a short time away from his native country.

12. *But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God*] The oldest MSS. omit *the things.* The verb "preaching" is the same as in *v.* 4, and contains the notion of "gospel" or "glad tidings." Now that the field of the preachers' labour is being extended we have a further definition of the character of the message which they carried everywhere. "The kingdom of God" was the subject of Christ's converse with the disciples during the forty days after His resurrection (i. 3).

and the name of Jesus Christ] i.e. that He was the Messiah of whom there was knowledge and perhaps some expectation among the Samaritans (John iv. 25, 42). The question of the woman of Samaria "Is not this the Christ?" was answered by Philip's preaching.

13. *Then* [And] *Simon himself believed also*] We can see from the history which follows that the belief here described was of a very imperfect nature. It perhaps amounted to no more than the conviction that in Philip was some power greater than his own. We have an example of a like imperfect belief described in like words in St John's Gospel (viii. 31), "Then said Jesus to those Jews which *believed* on him," and all that follows in the chapter shews that the belief which they professed was not enough to prevent them from plotting for Christ's death.

when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding *the* miracles and signs *which were* done.

14—25. *Peter and John sent down to Samaria. Conduct of Simon Magus.*

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto
15 them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered [was amazed] St Luke's words imply that Simon was only wonder-struck at the sight of the works wrought by Philip, just as his own works had made the Samaritans to wonder.

beholding the miracles and signs which were done] Better, *beholding the signs and great miracles wrought.* There is apparently a distinction intended by St Luke between the belief of the Samaritans and that of Simon. When they believed, it was the preaching and the glad tidings to which they most gave heed, but the verb used in this verse seems to paint Simon as one who gazed with wonder only on a sight which was beyond him to explain.

14—25. PETER AND JOHN SENT DOWN TO SAMARIA. CONDUCT OF SIMON MAGUS.

14. *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem*] The whole twelve still abiding there (*v.* 1) and evidently all taking their part in the administration of the affairs of the Church, though it does not fall within St Luke's purpose to notice what each did or said.

heard that Samaria had received the word of God] There was a communication kept up between the fugitives from Jerusalem and the twelve even from the first. Samaria here means the district, for although Philip's preaching was in one city, the newly-baptized would spread abroad in every part, and carry the teaching forth as the woman of Samaria did her "new learning" (John iv. 28). They had received the word of God as their countrymen before, so as "to know that this is indeed the Christ the Saviour of the world."

they sent unto them Peter and John] We gather from this passage that there was no special preeminence assigned to any among the twelve in these earliest days. Peter and John were sent forth on their mission by the decision of the whole body. These two were probably chosen for such a work, as they had taken the most active part and in concert (iii. 1) in establishing the Church in Jerusalem.

15. *who, when they were come down*, &c.] It is clear from the whole history that the special gift of the Holy Ghost, bestowed at this period on the Christian converts in various places, was not given except through the Apostles. The case of Ananias, sent by God's special command to Saul, differs from all others. Peter could promise it (ii. 38) to those who should repent and be baptized, but the Samaritan

(for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they 16
were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then 17
laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the
Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on 18
of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered
them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on 19
whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.
But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, 20
because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be pur-

converts whom Philip had made received no share of such powers till the arrival of Peter and John. But the Apostles make it manifest by their prayer that the gift was not theirs either to impart or withhold, but was "of God," as Peter calls it (*v.* 20).

16. *they were baptized in* [into] *the name*, &c.] The preposition, which is the same that is used by Christ (Matt. xxviii. 19) at the institution of the Sacrament, implies the tie by which the new converts are in baptism bound to Christ as His followers, servants, worshippers.

17. *Then laid they their hands on them*] That there might be some outward sign of this imparted grace. So Ananias (ix. 17) laid his hands on Saul, and he received the Holy Ghost. But on Cornelius and his companions (x. 44) the same gift was bestowed while Peter spake unto them.

18. *And when Simon saw*, &c.] Simon's conduct now makes it clear how limited his faith had been. As he offered to buy the power, so we may be sure he meant to sell it. His faith, such as it was, had only sprung from his amazement.

he offered them money] From his name, all trafficking in sacred things has since been called *Simony*.

19. *saying, Give me also this power*] The character of the man is shewn by what he asks for. He does not desire the Holy Ghost for himself as a spiritual gift to seal his baptism, but that he may be able to bestow, what he looks upon as a higher power than his own magic, upon others. We can learn from this narrative that the gift of the Holy Ghost had been made apparent by the new powers conferred on those who received it. Their works and words Simon had seen and heard, and hence his application to the Apostles.

20. *But Peter said unto him, Thy money* [silver] *perish with thee*] It is clear from what follows that this terrible invocation of doom upon this offender is to be qualified by the condition supplied from *v.* 22, where repentance and prayer are pointed out as means whereby even so great a sinner may find forgiveness. And St Peter may have thus joined Simon in the same destruction as his money, because he foresaw that there was little or no hope that such a man could be brought to repentance unless the consequence of his sin were set before him in all its terror.

because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money] Better, *because thou thoughtest to purchase*, &c. Simon had

21 chased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this
22 matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.
23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in*
24 the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said,

given no heed to the prayer of the Apostles that the gift of the Spirit should be sent down. He thought not of it as a "gift of God," but by the language which St Peter here employs of him, he considered that if it could be once secured by him it would be his own at all times and for ever.

21. *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter* (or *word*)] By the word "lot" the thought is carried back to the election of Matthias (i. 26). In that case the choice had been left to the "Lord who knows the hearts of all men," but Simon's character is patent to all; "his heart was not right with God." If the literal rendering, "in this word," be adopted, the reference is to *v.* 14, where it is said, "Samaria had received the *word* of God."

22. *Repent therefore*, &c.] On this condition not only could the stern wish of Peter be averted, but the anger of God also. We see therefore that the words of the Apostle in *v.* 20 must have been coupled in his mind with such condition, but the further language of this verse seems to imply that to Peter's mind there was not much hope of such repentance.

and pray God] The oldest MSS. read "the Lord," and this is what was to be expected, for the offence was specially against Christ. Simon, with corrupt motives, was seeking to be enrolled among those who were called by Christ's name.

if perhaps the thought of thine heart may [shall] *be forgiven thee*] The word rendered "thought" is found in the N.T. only here, and gives the idea of a matured plan. The Apostle sees how full the mind of Simon has been of the scheme which he has conceived, and the knowledge of this seems expressed in the "if perhaps" with which this clause begins. He will not declare that there is not hope even for such an offender, but the covetousness, which is idolatry, makes repentance almost impossible.

23. *For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*] The preposition *in* makes a great difficulty in this verse. The word in the original means *into* or *for*. The construction has been compared with that of the Hebrew preposition ל=*for* after the verb "to be" in passages such as Ezek. xxxvii. 22, "I will make them one nation," literally, "*unto* one nation." But instances of this construction are not common enough in the O.T. for an imitation of it in the N.T. to be probable. It seems better therefore not to take "gall of bitterness" and "bond of iniquity" as thus in apposition with the subject of the sentence, but rather to regard the preposition as used with the sense of motion towards a place or state and subsequent rest there.

Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of *these things* which ye have spoken come upon me. And they, when they 25
had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26—40. *Philip baptizes an Ethiopian Eunuch.*

And *the* angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, 26
Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth

So it is found in Luke xi. 7, "My children are with me in (εἰς) bed," where the meaning is "They have come into and are remaining in bed." For the expression "gall of bitterness," cp. Deut. xxix. 18, where those who serve false gods are spoken of as "a root that beareth gall and wormwood." See also the "root of bitterness," Heb. xii. 15. The second expression is found as "bands of wickedness" (Isa. lviii. 6). The whole sentence would thus imply that Simon had gone from one evil to another till he had reached and was remaining in a stage which deserved the reprobation spoken against idolatry in the O.T., and had allowed evil to make him its prisoner.

24. *that none of these* [the] *things which ye have spoken come upon me*] Simon shews by the character of his petition that he is not moved by a true spirit of repentance. He utters no word of sorrow for the evil of his thought, but only petitions that he may suffer no punishment. Yet we can see that he had not taken the expression of St Peter in *v.* 20 as a curse invoked upon him by the Apostle, but only as a declaration of the anger of God, and of the certainty of a penalty upon wilful continuance in such sin. His entreaty may be compared with that oft-repeated petition of Pharaoh to Moses (Exod. viii. 8, 28, ix. 28, x. 17) "Intreat the Lord for me," extorted by fear and followed by no change of conduct.

25. *And they* [They therefore], *when they had testified and preached* [spoken] *the word of the Lord, returned to* [towards] *Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in* [to] *many villages of the Samaritans*] Peter and John had not been sent forth to make an extended missionary journey, but only to confirm the work of the Evangelists who had first preached and baptized in Samaria, by laying their hands upon the converts. This done they returned to their place in Jerusalem, but by the way preached in such villages of Samaria as lay in their road.

26—40. Philip baptizes an Ethiopian Eunuch.

26. *And the angel of the Lord*] The Gk. has *an angel*. While Peter and John were carrying on the work of Philip in Samaria, God directs the Evangelist to a new scene of labour.

spake unto Philip] Most probably in a vision as to Cornelius (x. 3) and to Peter (xi. 5).

saying, Arise, and go toward the south] Gaza was the southernmost of the five great cities which the Philistines had formerly occupied, and

27 down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to
28 Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his

was on the route which a traveller from Jerusalem to Egypt would follow. In 96 B.C. the city of Gaza had been destroyed and its inhabitants massacred by Alexander Jannæus (Joseph. *Ant.* XIII. 13. 3), but it had been rebuilt by Gabinius (*Antiq.* XIV. 5. 3), though it is said that the restored city was nearer the sea than the ancient one. It continued to be a city of importance (see *Antiq.* XV. 7. 3 and XVII. 11. 4), and it could not therefore be to the city that the word "desert" which follows must be referred. From Samaria Philip would come directly south, and leaving Jerusalem on the east strike the road at some distance from that city.

unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza] There was more than one road from Jerusalem to Gaza, the more northern route went first to Ascalon and then by the coast to Gaza, another road was by Hebron and through the more desert country which lay to the west of it, and this is most likely the road intended in the narrative.

which is desert] The Greek puts these words in a separate clause, "this is desert," as is common in Hebrew. This disjunction has raised the question whether they belong to the direction which the angel was giving to Philip, or are an insertion by St Luke to mark the scene of the interview more clearly. If they had been inserted as an explanation it is not likely they would have been so brief, whereas if we regard them as a portion of the speech of the angel they contain all that was needed for Philip's instruction. That road toward Gaza which passed through the desert explains exactly the place to which he was to go.

27. *behold, a man of Ethiopia*] It is better to supply the substantive verb here, "behold *there was*, &c." otherwise the conjunction at the commencement of the next verse is left untranslated.

Ethiopia, like Cush in the O. T., is a general name given to the country which is now called Nubia and Abyssinia. Its northern portion was the great kingdom of Meroe, which we know was ruled over by queens for a long period (Plin. *H. N.* VI. 29), and it is from this kingdom, most probably, that the eunuch had come. Jews were abundant in Egypt, and this man had become a proselyte to their religion.

under Candace queen of the Ethiopians] We are told by Pliny (l. c.) that this was the name of a series of queens of Meroe, just as Pharaoh at an early period and Ptolemy subsequently were general names for the kings of Egypt, and Cæsar for the Roman emperors.

and had come to Jerusalem for to worship] As proselytes did, as well as Jews. This we learn from the enumeration of those who were present at the feast of Pentecost (ii. 10), among whom proselytes are

chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto 29
Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And 30
Philip ran *thither* to *him*, and heard him read the prophet
Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?
And he said, How can I, except some *man* should guide 31

expressly named. So (John xii. 20) we find Greeks coming up to the feasts at Jerusalem.

28. *was returning*] The original has a conjunction, "*and* was returning," i. e. at the termination of the feast.

read Esaias [Isaiah] *the prophet*] He was evidently reading aloud (see *v.* 30), and this was common among Orientals and was specially the practice of the Jews, who accompanied the reading with a good deal of bodily motion and considered this helpful to study. Thus T. B. *Erubin* 53 b *ad fin.* "Beruriah found a student who was reading, but not aloud; she pushed him and said to him, Is it not written 'Only when it is well ordered then it is kept'? If it is put in order by all thy two hundred and forty-eight limbs [thy study] will abide, but if not it will not abide. We have heard of a pupil of Rabbi Eliezer who studied but not aloud; and after three years he had forgotten his learning." And a little afterwards we read "Shemuel said to Rab Jehudah, Clever fellow! Open thy mouth when thou readest the Bible, and open thy mouth when thou studiest the Mishna, in order that the reading may abide, and that thy life may be prolonged. For it says (Prov. iv. 22), For life are they to them that find them" (or as the Rabbis preferred to interpret it, "to them that utter them forth").

29. *Then* [And] *the Spirit said unto Philip*] i. e. by a prompting from within.

Go near, and join thyself to this chariot] No doubt this royal treasurer had a numerous retinue, and a single traveller on a desert road would be doing what was natural in attaching himself to a train of people who were journeying in the same direction. Philip would therefore be able to approach and hear what was read without being deemed an intruder.

30. *And Philip ran thither to him*] Better, *ran up*. There is only the verb in the Greek.

Understandest thou, &c.] Philip's question refers to the application of the words. Of their reference to Jesus the eunuch could of course know nothing, but he might have heard some of the Jewish expositions of the passage. There is a play on the words in the original which it is impossible to reproduce in a translation.

31. *except some man* [one] *should* [shall] *guide me*] The eunuch, living far away from the received expounders of the Scriptures, feels that in a dark passage like that which he was reading he has need of trained instruction. He uses therefore the word which is employed for the guidance given by teacher to pupil. Our Lord uses it [Matt. xv. 14; Luke vi. 39] reproachfully of the blind guidance which the scribes and Pharisees in His day were giving to the people who came to them for instruction. He uses the same word for the guidance of

me? And he desired Philip that *he* would come up and
32 sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was
this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and
like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he
33 not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was
taken away: and who shall declare his generation?
34 for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch
answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the
35 prophet this? of himself, or of some other *man*? Then Philip

the Holy Spirit (John xvi. 13). It was a marked feature in the teaching of the Jews that explanations of Scripture were received from generation to generation, and that only was highly valued by them which a man had received from his teachers. Such a system accounts for the permanence of all their traditions.

And he desired [besought] *Philip that he would come up and sit with him*] The verb implies a very earnest request, and betokens the great desire which the eunuch had for more enlightenment.

32. *The place of the scripture*] The A. V. omits the conjunction at the beginning of this verse. Read, *Now* the place, &c. The word rendered "place" signifies the whole *context* of the passage. The eunuch was studying the whole account of the sufferer whom the prophet here describes. The verses quoted here are Isaiah liii. 7, 8, and are given word for word from the LXX. which it is most probable that the eunuch was reading, as being made in Egypt that version was most likely to be circulated among those Jews with whom this man would be brought into communication. Philip also belonging to the Grecians (vi. 5) would be most familiar with the Greek translation. It will be seen that the translation differs in some points from the original, but yet it is sufficiently close in sense to express the intention of the prophet or rather the "mind of the Spirit" in the prophecy, and on this translation therefore Philip founds his teaching.

33. *in his humiliation*, &c.] The Hebrew text signifies "Through oppression and through judgement (i. e. punishment) he was taken away."

who shall declare his generation?] i. e. who shall describe his contemporaries, men who under a form of judicial punishment oppressed the sufferer, and put him to death?

for his life is taken from the earth] The Hebrew has "for he was cut off out of the land of the living." It will be seen from a comparison of the Hebrew and the LXX. that the latter is in some parts rather a paraphrase than a translation.

Some of the Jews interpreted this passage of the Messiah and some of the congregation of Israel. In the Targum of Jonathan these two interpretations run side by side.

34. *of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?*] As Isaiah lxi. was held by the Jews to relate to Isaiah himself,

opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their* way, 36
they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And 37
Philip said, If thou believest with all *thine* heart, *thou* mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand 38
still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they 39
were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, &c.," so the eunuch enquires whether the words he has been reading have the same reference.

35. *and began at the same* [this] *scripture, and preached unto him Jesus*] It can hardly be doubted that during his sojourn in Jerusalem the eunuch had heard the history of the new teachers who had created such an excitement in the city, and so he would have had some story told him of the founder of the new community, but his informants would have been Jews, and he would only have heard from them such a version of what had been done as represented Jesus as one of the many deceivers who abounded in those times.

36. *And as they went on their* [the] *way*] We must suppose that Philip travelled for some time with the eunuch, for not only has he explained that in Jesus was fulfilled all that the prophets had spoken concerning the sufferings of the Messiah, but has taught him that believers in Jesus are to be admitted into the Christian Church by baptism, of which sacrament he desires to be a partaker at once.

37. *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*] The whole of this verse is omitted in the oldest MSS. It probably found its way into the text of those MSS. where it does exist from the margin. Such a margin would be formulated by those who, when the Church had become more extended, and formal professions of faith were the rule before baptism, felt that there was a want of completeness in the narrative unless some such confession were supposed to have been made. Thus the margin became a kind of exposition, and in the end found acceptance in the text.

38. *And he commanded the chariot to stand still*] i.e. he ordered the chariot-driver to stop, and of course the whole retinue would see what took place, and they may certainly be regarded as the nucleus of a congregation to be established in Ethiopia. Tradition tells us that the eunuch laboured to evangelize his countrymen, and none were more likely to be influenced by his teaching than those who were present at his baptism and were, with him, witnesses of the way in which Philip was taken from them.

and they went down both into the water] As was the custom among the Jews. Thus John baptized his followers in the Jordan.

39. *the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*] Just as Obadiah ex-

away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he
40 went *on* his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus:
and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he
came to Cesarea.

1—9. *Saul's mission to Damascus and his Conversion.*

9 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter
against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

pected Elijah would be caught away while he himself went on his errand to Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 12). Compare the language of Ezekiel (iii. 12, 14, viii. 3, &c.), "So the spirit lifted me up and took me away."

that [and] *the eunuch saw him no more*] This marvellous removal of Philip would confirm the eunuch and his companions in their faith. They would recognize that he who had been sent unto them was a man of God.

and he went on his way rejoicing] The Greek says "for he went, &c.," and thus gives the reason why Philip was seen no more of the eunuch. He did not go back, like the sons of the prophets at Jericho, who went to seek Elijah, but being filled with joy at the new light which God had sent to him, felt no anxiety for the messenger by whom God had sent it, but an assurance that he was cared for by the hand which had sent him forth.

40. *But Philip was found at Azotus*] That is, he appeared again and continued the work of his ministry. The expression is a translation of a Hebrew verb which is often rendered in A.V. "to be present." Cp. Esther i. 5, "that were present," and in the margin, Heb. "found."

Azotus is the ancient Ashdod (1 Sam. v. 1—7), one of the five chief cities of the Philistines when the Israelites settled in Canaan.

till he came to Cesarea] This was Cæsarea Sebaste, so called in honour of Augustus (Greek, *Sebastos*) Cæsar (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVI. 5. 1). It was the chief city of Palestine under the Roman rule, and lay at the extreme north of the plain of Sharon. It is mentioned in the Acts as the place at which Cornelius was stationed (x. 1), and it seems that Philip made his home there (xxi. 8).

IX. 1—9. Saul's mission to Damascus and his Conversion.

1. *And* [But] *Saul, yet breathing out threatenings* [threatening] It is better to translate the conjunction adversatively here, as the new subject is not connected except with the first sentence of chap. viii. The verb in this clause should be rendered "breathing," not "breathing out." Threatening and slaughter was, as it were, the atmosphere in which Saul was living.

and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord] We are not told of any other death, but Stephen's, in which Saul was a participator,

and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, 2
that if he found any of *this* way, whether they were men or
women, he might bring *them* bound unto Jerusalem. And as 3

but we can gather from his own words (Acts xxvi. 10) "when they were put to death, I gave my voice [vote] against them," that the protomartyr was not the only one who was killed in the time of this persecution. It has been suggested that the zeal which Saul shewed at the time of Stephen's death led to his election into the Sanhedrin, and so he took a judicial part in the later stages of the persecution, and, it may be, from a desire to justify the choice of those who had placed him in authority, he sought to be appointed over the enquiry after the Christians in Damascus. We gather from xxvi. 10 that before this inquisitorial journey he had been armed with the authority of the chief priests in his search after the Christians in Jerusalem.

went unto the high priest] who would most likely be the authority through whom the power, which the Great Sanhedrin claimed to exercise, in religious matters, over Jews in foreign cities, would be put in motion.

2. *and desired of him letters*] These are the papers which constituted his "authority and commission" (xxvi. 12). From that passage we learn that the issuing of these papers was the act of the whole body, for Paul there says they were "from the chief priests."

to Damascus] Of the history of this most ancient (Gen. xiv. 15) city in the world, see the *Dictionary of the Bible*. It had from the earliest period been mixed up with the history of the Jews, and great numbers of Jews were living there at this time, as we can see from the subsequent notices of their conduct in this chapter. We are told by Josephus (*B. J.* II. 20. 2) that ten thousand Jews were slaughtered in a massacre in Damascus in Nero's time, and that the wives of the Damascenes were almost all of them addicted to the Jewish religion.

to the synagogues] As at Jerusalem, so in Damascus the synagogues were numerous, and occupied by different classes and nationalities. Greek-Jews were sure to be found in so large a city.

that if he found any of this way] Better, "any that were of the Way." The name "the Way" soon became a distinctive appellation of the Christian religion. The fuller expression "the way of truth" is found 2 Pet. ii. 2; and the brief term is common in the Acts. See xix. 9, 23, xxii. 4, xxiv. 14, 22.

whether...men or women] We can mark the fury with which Saul raged against the Christians from this mention of the "women" as included among those whom he committed or desired to commit to prison. Cp. viii. 3 and xxii. 4. The women played a more conspicuous part among the early Christians than they were allowed to do among the Jews. See note on i. 14.

he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem] That the whole authority of the Great Sanhedrin might be employed for the extinction of the new teaching.

he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there
4 shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to
the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul,

3. *And as he journeyed*] There were two roads by which Saul could make his journey, one the caravan road which led from Egypt to Damascus, and kept near the coast line of the Holy Land till it struck eastward to cross the Jordan at the north of the Lake of Tiberias. To join this road Saul must have at first turned westward to the sea. The other way led through Neapolis and crossed the Jordan south of the Sea of Tiberias, and passing through Gadara went north-eastward to Damascus. We have no means whereby to decide by which road Saul and his companions took their way. The caravan road was a distance of one hundred and thirty-six miles, and occupied six days for the journey.

he came near Damascus] The original is more full. Read, "it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus." The party must have reached the near neighbourhood of the city, for his companions (*v.* 8) "led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus" after the vision.

and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven] In xxii. 6 we are told that the time of the day was "about noon" when the vision was seen, and in xxvi. 13, Paul says that "at mid-day" the light was "above the brightness of the sun." The mid-day glare of an Eastern sun is of itself exceedingly bright, and the hour was chosen, we cannot doubt, in order that "the glory" of this heaven-sent light should not be confounded with any natural phenomenon. It was in the midst of this glory that Christ was seen by Saul (1 Cor. xv. 8), so that he can enumerate himself among those who had beheld the Lord after His resurrection.

4. *And he fell to the earth*] Dazzled by the intense brightness. From xxvi. 14 we find that not only Saul but his companions were struck down by the light, though there was more in the vision which he beheld than was made evident to them, and by reason of the greater glory which was manifested to him, his natural sight was blinded.

and heard a voice] We cannot represent in English the different case of the noun in this verse, and in 7. The Greek puts here the accusative case and there the genitive, and thus indicates that there was a difference in the nature of the hearing of Saul and of his companions. And Paul in xxii. 9 marks the distinction in his own narration, for he says "They heard not the voice (accusative) of him that spake to me." As this difference is made both in St Luke's first account, and in the speech of St Paul at Jerusalem, it seems reasonable to accept the explanation which has long ago been given of this grammatical variation, and to understand that Saul heard an articulate sound, a voice which spake to him, while his companions were only conscious of a sound from which they comprehended nothing. St Paul then is precise when he says "they heard not the voice" which

why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, 5
Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou perse-
cutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And 6
he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have
me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into

I heard, and St Luke is correct when in *v.* 7 he says "they heard a sound."

saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?] It is very noteworthy that in all the three accounts of the vision the Greek text of Saul's name is a transliteration of the Hebrew, shewing that we have here a very close adherence to the words of Jesus. The Lord spake in the language of His people, and both the Evangelist and the Apostle have preserved for us this remarkable feature of the heavenly address. The only other place where the Hebrew form of Saul's name is retained is in the speech of Ananias when (ix. 17) he comes to see the convert in his blindness. As he also had received a communication from Jesus in connection with Saul's conversion, we can understand how the same form of the name would have been given to him. Moreover he was himself, to judge from his name, a Hebrew, and therefore that form would be most natural on his lips. Except in these cases St Luke always employs the Greek form of the word.

Christ speaks of Himself as persecuted by Saul, because "in all the affliction of his people he is afflicted" (Isa. lxiii. 9), and "whoso toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye" (Zech. ii. 8).

5. *And he said, Who art thou, Lord?*] Saul is sensible of the Divine nature of the vision, and shews this by his address. The appearance of Christ, though in a glorified body, must have been like that which He wore in His humanity, and since Saul does not recognize Jesus, we may almost certainly conclude that he had not known Him during His ministerial life.

And the Lord said] The best texts have only "And he," the verb "said" being understood.

I am Jesus whom thou persecutest] In xxii. 8 St Paul gives the fuller form of the sentence, "I am Jesus of Nazareth." By using this name, the being whose Divine nature Saul has already acknowledged by calling him "Lord," at once and for ever puts an end to Saul's persecuting rage, for he is made to see, what his master Gamaliel had before suggested (v. 39), that to persecute Jesus was to "fight against God."

it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6. *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him*] These words have been inserted here in some MSS. for the sake of making in this place a complete narrative by the combination and adaptation of the additional particulars given in xxvi. 14 and xxii. 10. It is easy to understand the desire which prompted such a combination. The best MSS. omit the words here, giving them where they more naturally find place, in the personal narratives of St Paul himself.

6. *Arise*] The MSS. which omit the above words insert a conjunc-

7 the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And
the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hear-
8 ing a voice, but seeing no *man*. And Saul arose from the
earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no *man:* but
they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.

tion here. Read, *But* arise. Saul had continued prostrate as he had fallen down at the first.

and go into the city] A proof that the party of travellers had arrived very nearly at Damascus. Tradition here, as in many other instances, has fixed on a spot as the scene of this Divine vision. It is placed outside the eastern gate, and about a mile from the city. Such a situation answers very well, but its fitness is the only ground for attaching any weight to the tradition.

and it shall be told thee what thou must do] In xxvi. 16—18 we have an abstract given by the Apostle of the labours for which Christ designed him, and the words in that passage are placed as a portion of the Divine communication made before Saul entered Damascus, but as in that narrative no mention is made of Ananias or his visit, we may conclude that we have instead a brief notice of the message which Ananias brought to him, and that therein is contained a declaration of what Jesus in the vision only spoke of as "what thou must do."

7. *And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless*] Cp. Dan. x. 7, "I Daniel alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw not the vision, but a great quaking fell upon them."

Saul was not only furnished with authority, but also with men who were to carry out his intentions and bring the prisoners to Jerusalem. Painters have represented the travellers as riding on horseback, but there is no warrant for this in any form of the narrative.

stood here means "remained fixed," "did not move." They had been stricken down as well as Saul (xxvi. 14).

hearing a [the] *voice*] On the variation of case here, and the probable difference of meaning, see note on *v.* 4.

but seeing [beholding] *no man*] The verb is the same that is used by Stephen (vii. 56), "Behold, I *see* the heavens opened." In their astonishment, and guided by the sound, Saul's companions lifted up their faces to the sky, but as with the words so with the appearance of Jesus; it was unseen by all but one, but to him was manifest enough to form a ground of his confidence in his Apostolic mission: "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Cor. ix. 1).

8. *and* [but] *when his eyes were opened, he saw no man* [nothing] The vision had struck him blind. He opened his eyes, but their power had been taken away. Thus his physical condition becomes a fit representation of the mental blindness which he afterwards (xxvi. 9) deplores: "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth."

but [and] *they led him by the hand*] His companions saw all things as before, and were able to guide him who had started forth as the leader in their mission of persecution.

And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat 9
nor drink.

10—22. *Saul's sight restored. He preaches in Damascus.*

And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named 10
Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias

9. *And he was three days without sight*] During this time we cannot but think the illumination of his mind was being perfected by the Spirit. He had been convinced by the vision that Jesus was risen from the dead and ascended into heaven. But more than this was needed for the preparation of this mighty missionary. He himself (Gal. i. 16) speaks of God revealing His Son not only *to* but *in* him, and that his conferences were not with flesh and blood, and we are told below (*v.* 12) that the coming of Ananias had been made known unto him by vision. To this solemn time of darkness may also perhaps be referred those "visions and revelations of the Lord" which the Apostle speaks of to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xii. 1—4). While his bodily powers were for a time in suspense, he may fitly describe himself as not knowing whether what he saw was revealed to him "in the body or out of the body," and it was the spiritual vision only which saw the third heaven and paradise, and the spirit heard those "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

and neither did eat nor drink] The mental anguish for a time overpowered the natural craving for food. The newly called Apostle was contemplating in all its enormity his sin in persecuting the Church of Christ, and though there were times of comfort and refreshing before Ananias came, yet the great thought which filled Saul's mind would be sorrow for his late mad and misdirected zeal, and so the three days of blindness formed a period of deep penitence.

10—22. SAUL'S SIGHT RESTORED. HE PREACHES IN DAMASCUS.

10. *And* [Now] *there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias*] Of this disciple we have no further mention in Holy Writ except in chap. xxii. 12, where St Paul describes him as "a devout man according to the Law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt" at Damascus. Whether he had become a Christian during the life of Jesus, or was among the Jewish converts on the day of Pentecost or at some subsequent time and had been forced to flee from Jerusalem by the persecution which followed on the death of Stephen, we are not told, but we can gather, from the words which he employs in expressing his reluctance to visit Saul, that he had much and trustworthy communication still with the Holy City, for he knows both of the havock which the persecutor has caused, and of the purpose of his mission to Damascus. On the name Ananias see v. 1, note.

and to him said the Lord in a vision] As Saul had been prepared for the visit by a vision, so Ananias is by a vision instructed to go to him. Dean Howson's remarks (*Life and Epistles of St Paul*, i. 101) on this preparation and its similarity to the preparation of Peter and Cornelius

11 And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called
12 Saul, of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his*
13 hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusa-
14 lem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to
15 bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him,

deserve to be dwelt on. "The simultaneous preparation of the hearts of Ananias and Saul, and the simultaneous preparation of those of Peter and Cornelius—the questioning and hesitation of Peter and the questioning and hesitation of Ananias—the one doubting whether he might make friendship with the Gentiles, the other doubting whether he might approach the enemy of the Church—the unhesitating obedience of each when the Divine will was made clearly known—the state of mind in which both the Pharisee and the Centurion were found—each waiting to see what the Lord would say unto them—this close analogy will not be forgotten by those who reverently read the two consecutive chapters, in which the baptism of Saul and the baptism of Cornelius are narrated in the Acts of the Apostles." When so much criticism has been expended to shew that the Acts is a work of fiction written at a late period to minimize certain differences supposed to exist between the teaching of St Paul and that of St Peter, it is well to know that others have seen, in these undoubted analogies, proofs of the working of a God who is ever the same, and who would have all men to be saved through Jesus Christ.

11. *into the street which is called Straight*] A long straight street still runs through Damascus, and is probably (so persistent is every feature of Oriental life) the same in which Ananias found Saul in the house of Judas.

12. *and hath seen in a vision*] The oldest MSS. omit "in a vision." It could only have been in this wise that Saul had been informed, and the words are merely a gloss.

13. *I have heard by* [from] *many*, &c.] These words seem to point to a longer residence of Ananias in Damascus than he could have made if he had only left Jerusalem after the death of Stephen; and so do the words (xxii. 12) which speak of his good report among all the Jews that dwelt at Damascus.

how much evil he hath done to thy saints, &c.] The Christian converts were probably called "saints," i.e. "holy persons," at a very early period after the death of Christ because of the marvellous outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon the first converts, cp. 1 Pet. i. 15. The word is of frequent occurrence in the greetings of St Paul's Epistles.

14. *all that call on thy name*] To call on Christ is the same as to

Go *thy way:* for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will shew him how great *things* he must suffer 16
for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and 17
entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And 18
immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales:

be a believer in Him. The expression is used as an apposition to "saints" in 1 Cor. i. 2, and thence we see what in the Pauline language was meant by the word "saints."

15. *he is a chosen vessel unto me*] Literally, "a vessel of election." This is a Hebrew form of expression, cp. Jer. xxii. 28, where King Coniah is called "a vessel wherein is no pleasure." So Jer. li. 34, "He hath made me [to be] an empty vessel," literally, "vessel of emptiness."

to bear my name] i.e. this shall be the load or duty which I will lay upon this my chosen instrument.

before the Gentiles] This was doubtless a revelation to Ananias, who as a devout Jew would not yet have contemplated the inclusion of the whole world in the Church of Christ. The Gentiles are placed first in the enumeration, because among them specially was Saul's field of labour to be. For the wide spirit in which the Apostle embraced his commission, see Rom. i. 13, 14, &c.

and kings] As before Agrippa (xxvi. 1, 32) and at Rome, in consequence of the appeal to be heard before Cæsar.

16. *for I will shew him how great* [many] *things he must suffer*] Cp. Paul's own words (xx. 23), "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." The truth of this is borne out by that long list of the Apostle's sufferings which he enumerates in his letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 23—28) and the less detailed list in the same Epistle (vi. 4—5).

17. *Brother Saul*] The Hebrew form of the name, see *v.* 4, note.

the Lord, even Jesus] Combining the name "Lord" used by Saul when the vision appeared, with that "Jesus" which Christ, speaking from His glory, uttered in answer to Saul's enquiry, Who art thou?

that appeared unto thee in the way] Thus was brought to Saul after his three days' blindness a confirmation from without of the reality of what he had seen on the road as he came. The words at the same time give an earnest that here was the teacher who would explain to him what he was to do.

and be filled with the Holy Ghost] On this occasion the Holy Ghost was bestowed without the laying on of the hands of one of the twelve.

18. *And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales*] The word rendered "scales" is used as a technical term for a disease of the eye by Hippocrates, and the verb derived from it is found (Tobit xi. 13) used of the cure of a disease of similar character. "And the whiteness

and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was bap-
19 tized, and when he had received meat, he was strengthened.
Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at
20 Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the

pilled away from the corners of his eyes." This "whiteness" is rendered in the margin (Tob. ii. 10) "white films," and was clearly something like the "scales" which caused Saul's blindness, and a process for the cure thereof is called (iii. 17) "to *scale* away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes." St Paul (xxii. 11) ascribes his blindness to the glory of the heavenly light, and it may have been some secretion, caused by the intensity of that vision, which formed over them, and at his cure fell away. Some have thought that his constant employment of an amanuensis, and the mention of the large characters in which he wrote in his Epistle to the Galatians (vi. 11) "Ye see in what large letters I have written to you," are indications that the Apostle suffered permanently in his eyesight from the heavenly vision.

and he received [recovered, and so in 17] *sight forthwith*] The oldest MSS. omit the last word.

and arose, and was baptized] In the fuller account (xxii. 16) we learn that the exhortation to be baptized was part of the message with which Ananias was charged, and so was divinely commissioned to receive Saul thus into the Christian Church.

19. *and when he had received* [taken] *meat*, &c.] Needed after his three days fast, but (says Calvin) "he refreshed not his body with meat until his soul had received strength."

Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus] The word Saul is not found in the oldest MSS. Read "And he was, &c." The expression rendered "certain days" is the same which in x. 48, xv. 36, xvi. 12, xxiv. 24, and xxv. 13 is used by St Luke, and in all cases the time indicated by them must have been brief. It was for this amount of time that Peter tarried with Cornelius, the words are applied to a short period spent by Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, to the time of St Paul's stay at Philippi, to the short time which Paul was detained at Cæsarea before his hearing by Felix, and to a like period between the arrival of Festus and the visit which Agrippa made to salute him as the new Governor. In most of these instances the time intended must have been very brief, and it is important to notice this here, because in *v.* 23 we shall find another expression which is translated "many days" and seems designed by the writer to indicate a somewhat longer period. It is clear, from the way in which "disciples" are here mentioned, that there was a numerous body of Christians in Damascus at this early period. Saul dwelt with them now not as an enemy but as a brother, by which name Ananias had been directed to greet him.

20. *And straightway he preached Christ* [proclaimed Jesus] *in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God*] The best MSS. read *Jesus* in this verse, and this naturally is correct. The preaching which was to be to

synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard 21
him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed
them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came
hither for that *intent*, that he might bring them bound unto
the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, 22
and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving
that this is *very* Christ.

the Jews a stumbling-block was that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, their long-expected Messiah.

He went, as was Christ's custom also, into the synagogues as the most likely places where to find an audience who would listen to his proclamation. His letters to the synagogues (*v.* 2) were not delivered, but he came as the herald of one of higher authority than the chief priests. For St Paul's constant practice of teaching in the Jewish synagogues, see xiii. 5, xiv. 1, xvii. 1, 10, xviii. 4, 19, xix. 8.

21. *But all that heard him were amazed*] Saul's fame as a persecutor of Christians was well known to the Jews of Damascus, and the authorities of the synagogues may have been instructed beforehand to welcome him as a zealous agent. If so their amazement is easy to understand. It is clear from what follows in this verse that they knew of his mission and the intention thereof, though Saul did not bring them his "commission and authority." We should gather also from the strong expression "destroyed," used to describe Saul's career in Jerusalem, that the slaughter of the Christians there had not been limited to the stoning of Stephen.

22. *But Saul increased the more in strength*] i. e. he became more and more energetic in his labours and the Holy Ghost gave him more power. His fitness for the labour on which he was entering was very great. He possessed all the Jewish learning of a zealous pupil of Gamaliel, and now that he had seen Jesus in the glory of the Godhead, he could use his stores of learning for the support of the new teaching in such wise as to commend it to those Jews who were looking for the consolation of Israel. But these would naturally be the smallest portion of his hearers. The rest of the Jews were confounded. They heard their Scripture applied by a trained mind, and shewn to be applicable to the life of Jesus. They could not at this time make an attack on Saul, for they were paralysed by what they heard, and it was only when some time had elapsed that they resolved to continue in their rejection of Jesus, and then, at a later time, their persecution of Saul began.

proving that this is very [the] *Christ*] The word here rendered "proving" is used again in xvi. 10, and translated "assuredly gathering." The idea conveyed by it is that of putting things side by side, and so making a comparison and forming a conclusion. Thus Saul, well equipped with a knowledge of the ancient Scriptures, set before his hearers a description of the Messiah as he is there portrayed, and relating the life history of Jesus, shewed them that in Him the Scriptures of the prophets had been fulfilled.

23—25. *A Plot against Saul's Life. His Flight from Damascus.*

23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took
24 counsel to kill him: but their laying await was known of

23—25. A Plot against Saul's Life. His Flight from Damascus.

23. *And after that* [when] *many days were fulfilled*] As the visit to Jerusalem mentioned in *v.* 26 seems to follow closely upon the events narrated in *v.* 25, and as that visit was not made till after the retirement into Arabia of which St Paul speaks (Gal. i. 17, 18) thus: "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were Apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter," we must place the visit to Arabia between the events recorded in *v.* 22 and the fresh narration which commences in this verse. St Luke has marked, as it seems, the two periods as distinct by calling one time of residence "certain days," and the other "many days." The following seems to have been the order of events. Saul preached for "certain days" in Damascus immediately after his conversion. He then made his journey into Arabia, either for preaching or for retirement and spiritual communion, after which he made a second visit to Damascus, on which latter occasion his enemies sought to take his life. This latter visit is here spoken of as lasting "many days." The words thus translated are used in several places of the Acts; as in this chapter, *v.* 43, of the stay made by Peter at Joppa after the raising of Dorcas; also xviii. 18, of the time, "a good while," which St Paul spent in Corinth after he had been brought before Gallio; and in xxvii. 7 of the "many days" of slow sailing during the Apostle's voyage to Rome. It is clear from these examples that the period covered by the words is very indefinite, but if we reckon the "three years" (Gal. i. 18) from Saul's conversion, then the first and last times of residence in Damascus would be included in that period, and we need not then extend either the stay in Arabia or the duration of this later visit to Damascus over a great while, especially if we remember that, to a Jew, one whole year with the end of the preceding and the beginning of the succeeding one was counted for three years.

the Jews took counsel to kill him] The deliberation and previous preparation implied in this expression are such as would take place, not among the people who were "confounded" by Saul's first preaching, but when they had become enraged against him after his second visit, when his words would be even more full of power than before, by reason of the time spent in preaching in Arabia, or more probably in spiritual communion to prepare himself for the labours which God had set before him.

24. *but their laying await* [plot] *was known of Saul*] Perhaps from the information of some of the Christian disciples, who would be well

Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* 25 down by the wall in a basket.

disposed to Saul by what they had heard of him from Ananias, and who played the part of friends in aiding his escape from Damascus.

And they watched the gates day and night to kill him] The gates were the places to which one fleeing from death would naturally make his way. St Paul says (2 Cor. xi. 32) of the circumstances under which this plot was made against his life, that "In Damascus the governor [Ethnarch] of King Aretas kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me." Hence it appears that it was no mere attack made by the Jews resident in Damascus, but they had gained the support of the authorities for the time being. We do not know enough of the history of Syria and Arabia at this period to be able to explain with certainty how an Ethnarch of Aretas, who was king of Arabia Petræa, came to be holding Damascus. But we do know (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 3. 1—4) that Aretas had been at war with Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, who in consequence of his attachment to his brother Philip's wife, had forsaken his own wife, who was the daughter of Aretas. Herod had appealed to Rome, and been promised the help of the Roman power, but the death of Tiberius (A.D. 37) checked the march of Vitellius, the Roman governor of Syria, into Arabia, and he thereupon returned to Antioch. It may have been that Aretas, encouraged by this withdrawal, had advanced, and in the general confusion had taken possession of Damascus. He had, in a former stage of the war, destroyed the army of Herod; and some of the Jews, who hated Herod, spoke of this destruction of his troops as a Divine judgement for his murder of John the Baptist. We can understand then that the Jews in Damascus might under such circumstances favour Aretas, and in return for their support be aided by his Ethnarch in an attempt on the life of Saul.

Or the occupation of Damascus by Aretas may have been (as Dean Howson suggests) in consequence of the change of policy which took place so widely at the death of Tiberius; and Caligula, in contradiction of what his predecessor had been designing, to crush Aretas, may have put the Arabian king in command of the city of Damascus for a time.

25. *Then the disciples took him by night*] The oldest MSS. read "But his disciples, &c.," and this well-supported reading favours the explanation of the "many days" given in *v.* 24. On his second visit Saul had remained long enough to have gathered round him a party of followers who accepted him as their teacher.

and let him down by [through] *the wall in a basket*] In 2 Cor. xi. 33 St Paul says, "And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall and escaped." Such apertures can be found in the walls of houses in all defenced cities, and it was by such a way that Rahab let the spies escape from Jericho (Josh. ii. 15), and Michal aided David's escape (1 Sam. xix. 12). The basket here mentioned (*σπυρίς*) is the same that

26—31. *Saul visits Jerusalem. He is sent away to Tarsus. The Churches have rest.*

26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to
join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of
27 him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Bar-

is spoken of (Matt. xv. 37) at the feeding of the four thousand in the mountain district west of the Sea of Galilee. It appears to have been large and soft, fit for carrying a large quantity of miscellaneous articles from the plain into the hills, while the baskets (*cophinoi*) spoken of at the feeding of the five thousand (Matt. xiv. 20) were such as the multitude, which in that case had followed Jesus on foot out of the cities, would be likely to carry in their hands. In a basket of the former kind Saul might easily be wrapped and then lowered over the city wall.

26—31. SAUL VISITS JERUSALEM. HE IS SENT AWAY TO TARSUS. THE CHURCHES HAVE REST.

26. *And when Saul* [he] *was come to Jerusalem*] The oldest MSS. omit the proper name. Saul had never visited Jerusalem since the day when he set out on his inquisitorial journey to Damascus, and he could only be known at that time to the Christians as their determined enemy.

he assayed to join himself to the disciples] If as a Jew he had gone to Alexandria or any other city where Jews were numerous, his first thought would have been to search out his co-religionists; so he acts now. He seeks to join the Christian community. But his own language (Gal. i. 16) shews us that he had made no attempt to spread the news of his changed feelings among the Christian congregations. "I conferred not with flesh and blood," he says, "but I went into Arabia, and returned to Damascus." An absence of three years, mainly in a region whence little news could come of his conversion and labours, and the memory of what evil he had done in days gone by, were enough to justify some hesitation about receiving him, on the part of the disciples.

but [**and**] *they were all afraid of him*] The conjunction is the ordinary copulative, and connects the two clauses, Saul's desire and the behaviour of the disciples. In Gal. i. 18 St Paul says his wish was to see Peter, and this we can very well understand, for though Saul had received his commission directly from Jesus, there were many things in the history of the life of Christ which could be best learned from the lips of him who had been with Jesus from the commencement of His ministry. But at first Saul came to the Christians at Jerusalem as an ordinary believer.

and believed not that he was a disciple] Here we see how little was known in Jerusalem of the history of Saul since his conversion, and we can understand those words of his own (Gal. i. 22), "I was unknown by face unto the Churches of Judæa which were in Christ." God had been training him for his work among the Gentiles, and although he was brought to Jerusalem that all might know that the Gospel was one, and

nabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was 28
with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he 29
spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed

that Saul was sent forth even as the twelve, yet no attempt is made by St Luke at this point, where it might have been most expected, to set forth the unanimity of Paul and Peter. It is left for St Paul himself to tell us of his desire to see Peter, and the historian only says they all were afraid of him.

27. *But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles*] i.e. to such of the Apostles as happened to be then in Jerusalem. During a short space of fifteen days it is easy to understand that all but Peter and James might be absent from Jerusalem. St Paul tells us he only saw these two during his visit (Gal. i. 19), and all that he says is perfectly consistent with St Luke's narrative. Barnabas, who introduced Saul to the Apostles, has already been mentioned as a Levite of Cyprus (iv. 36), and from the proximity of Cyprus to Cilicia, and the distinction of the schools of Tarsus, a conjecture has been hazarded that Barnabas may have been known to Saul before they came to Jerusalem. This would explain how it came to pass that while the other disciples were afraid of him, Barnabas listened to his statement and repeated it to the rest of the Church.

and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, &c.] It is worthy of notice in how many forms the statement of the appearance of Jesus to Saul is repeated. This was indeed the turning-point of the Apostle's life, Jesus of Nazareth seen as the glorified Son of God.

and how he had preached [spoken] *boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus*] Whether the knowledge of Barnabas was derived from Saul himself or from other sources we are not told, but in the political turmoil of the times (see *v.* 24, note) we may easily suppose that the teachings of a preacher who appeared for a brief space, and then retired from Damascus, and who had only lately reappeared, would not be widely known among the Church at Jerusalem.

28. *And he was with them*, &c.] i.e. for the fifteen days during which his visit lasted he was received into the fellowship of the Church.

29. *And he spake boldly*, &c.] The conjunction is left out in the best MSS. Read, "speaking boldly, &c."

in the name of the Lord Jesus] The last word is omitted in the oldest MSS.

and disputed against the Grecians] The Greek text says "and he spake and disputed, &c." These Grecians were the Greek-Jews at whose instigation Stephen had been put to death. Now Saul, who had consented unto that martyrdom, is exposed to the like persecution.

against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.
30 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to
31 Cesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

32—35. *Peter heals a paralytic at Lydda.*

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all

The very same word "disputed" is here used which was employed to describe the controversies with the protomartyr (vi. 9), and it is found nowhere else in this book. But it is worth notice that the attack is now reversed. The Grecians disputed with Stephen, now Saul disputes with them.

but they went about [sought] *to slay him*] As the Jews in Damascus had done.

30. *Which when the brethren knew*] Lit. "And when the brethren knew it." The disciples were informed as those of Damascus had been of the plot in that city.

they brought him down to Cesarea] i.e. to the seaport so called, not to Cæsarea Philippi, for the latter place was only touched by the road which led from Tyre to Damascus. The former was a place from which Tarsus could be reached either by sea or by the road which ran northward along the coast of Syria.

and sent him forth to Tarsus] where he was born, and which perhaps, next to Jerusalem, would appear to be the best centre from which his work could be carried on. For an account of Tarsus and its fame as a seat of heathen learning, see *Dict. of the Bible.*

31. *Then had the churches rest*, &c.] Better, "So the Church throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace." In the best texts the noun and all the verbs agreeing with it are in the singular number, and what is meant is the whole Christian body, not the various congregations. The cause of this peace for the Christians was that the attention of their persecutors the Jews was turned from them to resist the attempt made by Caligula (Joseph. *Antiq.* XVIII. 8. 2) to have his statue erected in the Temple at Jerusalem. This profanation was averted partly by the determined opposition of the Jews, and partly by the intercession of King Agrippa with the mad Emperor.

32—35. PETER HEALS A PARALYTIC AT LYDDA.

32. *as Peter passed throughout all quarters*] The history now turns from Saul to Peter, to shew us that when the former had been prepared for his special work the latter was taught by revelation that the time had arrived for the next and complete extension of the Church among all nations. Peter had been labouring, as no doubt all the rest of the twelve also (for we have seen that only two were at Je-

quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, 33 which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ 34 maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron 35 saw him, and turned to the Lord.

36—43. *Dorcas raised to life. Peter's stay at Joppa.*

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, 36

rusalem when Saul came thither), in building up the Churches in Judæa and Samaria, and the narrative of two miracles which follow in the history makes intelligible to us the position of Peter when Cornelius is warned to send for him.

he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda] On *saints*, see above on *v.* 13.

Lydda] The Hebrew *Lod*, 1 Chron. viii. 12. It was afterwards called *Diospolis*. It was near to Joppa, and a day's journey from Jerusalem. Josephus (*Antiq.* xx. 6. 2) calls it "a village not less than a city in largeness."

33. *which had kept his bed eight years*] There could therefore be no doubt cast upon the miraculous nature of his cure.

34. *Jesus Christ maketh thee whole*] As in the cure of the cripple at the Temple-gate (iii. 6), the Apostle makes known that he is but the messenger, and that the healer is Christ. We are not told that Æneas was a disciple, but it may be inferred that he was among "the saints," and that thus Peter was brought unto him.

35. *all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him*] No doubt his case of eight-years-long paralysis was well known to the dwellers in the village and neighbourhood, and to see such a one about in their midst again would be a cause for general remark and enquiry into the manner of his restoration. "When the Scripture saith *all* it doth not comprehend every one, how many soever it noteth, but it putteth *all* for the more part, or for many, or for the common sort of men" (Calvin on this verse).

Saron] Heb. *Sharon*. It is doubtful whether by this name is intended some village in the neighbourhood of Lydda or the whole district known as the "plain of Sharon," and extending along the coast from Joppa to Cæsarea. No place of this name has been noticed in the neighbourhood, and as in the original the word has the article, "the Sharon," it is better to refer it to the district.

36—43. Dorcas raised to life. Peter's stay at Joppa.

36. *Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple*] For an account of Joppa, one of the great seaports on the coast of Palestine, see *Dictionary of the Bible*.

which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this *woman* was
37 full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it
came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died:
whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper
38 chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa,
and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent
unto him two men, desiring *him* that *he* would not delay to
39 come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them.
When he was come, they brought him into the upper
chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and
shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while
40 she was with them. But Peter put *them* all forth, and

Dorcas is called a *disciple* that it may be seen that under the gospel there is no distinction between male and female (Gal. iii. 28).

named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas] Tabitha is the Aramaic form of a Hebrew proper name (2 Kings xii. 1) which signifies *a gazelle* (cp. Song iv. 5), as does the Greek word *Dorcas*.

this woman was full of good works, &c.] A favourite form of expression with St Luke. Cp. "Stephen full of faith and power" (vi. 8); Elymas, "full of all subtilty" (xiii. 10); and the Ephesians "full of wrath" (xix. 28). The sense is "given up to" or "devoted to."

37. *that she was* [fell] *sick, and died*] The proceedings which followed on her death are evidence of its reality. The probable reason for deferring the burial was the knowledge that Peter was close at hand, and the hope of the disciples that the power of Jesus might be exercised through him for the restoration to life of so eminent a disciple as Dorcas.

38. *desiring him that he would not delay to come to them*] The best MSS. give a more graphic form to the sentence by the use of the direct entreaty. Read, "intreating him, Delay not to come on to us." It is as though their supplication were "We have heard of the mighty works which Jesus has wrought by thy hands; extend thy journey to us, for we are in great need."

39. *Then* [And] *Peter arose and went with them*] We may be sure that the Apostle knew, by the Spirit, that it would please God to do something for the help of the distress at Joppa, when he set out with the messengers.

and all the widows stood by him weeping] These were the women who, with the dead Dorcas, had been busy in the good works to which they were all devoted. The petition of such a company was sure to have power with the Apostle, and their action shews how they place the good deeds of her whom they had lost far above their own.

40. *But Peter put them all forth*] As Christ had done (Matt.

kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her *his* hand, and lift her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

41 42 43

ix. 25) at the raising of Jairus' daughter, on which occasion Peter had been present.

and kneeled down, and prayed] Asking God that the consolation to be given to these mourners might be the restoration of the dead woman to life.

and turning him to the body] When by the Spirit's admonition he knew that his prayer was heard.

said, Tabitha, arise] If he spake in the Aramaic dialect, as is most probable, his utterance must have been nearly the same as that of our Lord (Mark v. 41), *Talitha cumi*, at the raising of the daughter of Jairus. But when both these utterances are interpreted in the places where they occur, it is astonishing to find those who would suggest that the *Tabitha* of this verse is an adaptation of the *Talitha* of the Gospel.

41. *when he had called the saints and widows*] These words make it evident that the petition sent to Peter had been the supplication of the whole Christian Church of Joppa, "Come on unto us and help us."

42. *and many believed in the Lord*] There seems to be intended by these words a fuller acceptance of the faith of Jesus than when it is said "they turned to the Lord" (see above, *v.* 35). The belief here wrought by the resurrection of Dorcas is like that mentioned (John xi. 45) of those who were won to the faith by the raising of Lazarus.

43. *he tarried many days*] On the indefinite nature of the time indicated here see above, *v.* 23, note.

with one Simon a tanner] The trade of a tanner was held as abominable by the Jews. A wife, it is said, could claim a divorce from a husband who became a tanner (Mishna *Khethuboth* VII. 10, where is recorded the following story): "It happened at Sidon that a tanner died, and left a brother who was also a tanner. The sages held that his (childless) widow had a right to plead, Thy brother I could bear but I cannot bear thee," and so in this case the woman might refuse to marry her husband's brother.

It is a sign that in the mind of St Peter some usages and prejudices of the Jews were already becoming of small account, when he makes his abode at the house of Simon a tanner. Such a step prepares us for the history of the next chapter, where he is instructed to go and preach to and baptize the Gentile Cornelius.

1—8. *Cornelius is divinely warned to send for Peter.*

10 There was a certain man in Cesarea called Cornelius, a
2 centurion of the band called the Italian *band*, a devout

X. 1—8. CORNELIUS IS DIVINELY WARNED TO SEND FOR PETER.

St Luke now brings to our notice the circumstances which attended the first preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. The Apostles, though informed by Christ's commission that they were to "teach all nations," yet tarried the Lord's leisure, and waited till the Spirit, who was their constant guide, shewed them a door opened for such extension of their labours. The first Gentile converts seem to have been living in some sort of communion with the Jews of Cæsarea, for Cornelius, the representative figure among them, was "of good report among all that nation," but yet from the complaints of the brethren at Jerusalem, when they heard what Peter had done, we can see that Cornelius was one of the "sinners of the Gentiles." "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised and didst eat with them" expresses the shock, which the strict observers of the Law experienced in this new development of the Church, and even Peter himself, though chosen to inaugurate the preaching to the Gentiles, was not always proof against the scruples and remonstrances of his brethren of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 12).

1. *There was a certain man in Cesarea*] The oldest MSS. omit the verb *was* here, and make the sentence read, "Now a certain man in Cæsarea... a devout man...which gave much alms...saw in a vision, &c." Cæsarea is the same place which is mentioned viii. 40, and was usually the residence of the Roman Procurator (see xxiii. 23—26, xxv. 1—4). The soldiers over whom Cornelius was centurion were the necessary troops to support the state and authority of the Roman representative, who at this time was Herod Agrippa, whom Claudius had made king over Judæa and Samaria.

called Cornelius] Lit. "Cornelius by name." The name shews he was a Roman, and perhaps he may have been of the famous Cornelian Gens. But there were also many plebeians of this name, for Sulla (Appian *B. C.* I. 100) bestowed the Roman franchise on 10,000 slaves and called them after his own name, "Cornelii."

a centurion] This was not a distinguished office. He was commander of the sixth part of a cohort, i.e. of half a maniple. The name must have been given to such officer when his command was over a *hundred* men. The Roman legion in these times was divided into ten cohorts, and each cohort into three maniples, so that the nominal strength of the legion would be 6000 men.

of the band] i.e. the cohort. Such a troop was stationed in Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 27).

called the Italian band] The name at first would be given to it from the country in which it was raised, but no doubt it would afterwards be recruited from other parts, and yet still retain its original title. Tacitus (*Hist.* I. 59 &c.) mentions an *Italian* legion. A centurion of a similar band, which was styled "Augustan," is mentioned (xxvii. 1) below.

man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.
He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the 3
day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.
And when he looked on him, he was 4
afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.
And now send men to Joppa, and call for 5

2. *a devout man*] i.e. he was a worshipper of the true God, but had not joined himself to the Jews in the observance of the Law. The language of St Peter in *v.* 28 shews us that he was not a complete proselyte. Wherever in the N.T. we find mention made of Roman centurions they appear to have been good men, Matt. viii. 5; Luke vii. 2, xxiii. 47.

and one that feared God with all his house] The earnestness of his devotion to God is evidenced by the character of his household. If his family be here meant, he had instructed them in the worship of God, and had provided that those who attended on him should also be of the same character. The soldier, whom he sends to Peter, is called "devout" in *v.* 7.

which gave much alms to the people] i.e. to the Jewish people among whom he was stationed. He was like the centurion (Luke vii. 5) of whom the Jews said, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue."

and prayed to God alway] thus shewing himself anxious for greater knowledge of God's way, which from xi. 14 we learn must have been the purport of the prayer of Cornelius.

3. *He saw in a vision evidently* [openly] i.e. he was not in a trance, as we read afterwards concerning Peter, but was employed in prayer when the angel appeared. See below, *v.* 30.

about the ninth hour of the day] This was the hour for evening prayer, see iii. 1. So we can see that Cornelius had adopted the Jewish hours of prayer.

4. *And when he looked on him*] Literally, "having fastened his eyes on him." The angel is called (*v.* 30) "a man in bright clothing." Such a sight would rivet the centurion's gaze at the first, and then the heavenly nature of the visitor made itself evident, and he was afraid.

What is it, Lord?] His language expresses his readiness to perform what shall be commanded, and his question implies, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

Thy prayers and thine alms are come [have gone] *up*] The idea is that of the prayers, like incense, when offered ascending up to God. Cp. Rev. viii. 3, 4, also v. 8, "vials full of odours which are the prayers of saints." Cf. Ps. cxli. 2.

for a memorial before God] They have been such as to be remembered before God, and now He is about to answer them. The portion of the meal offering which the priest was commanded to burn upon the altar to be an offering of a sweet savour unto the Lord (Lev. ii. 2) was

6 *one* Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one
Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell
7 thee what thou oughtest to do. And when the angel which
spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his
household servants, and a devout soldier of them that
8 waited on him continually; and when he had declared all
these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9—16. *Peter is prepared for their visit by a Vision.*

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew
nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the house to pray

called a "memorial," and the allusion is to the offerings of this kind. Cp. the words of the angel (Tobit xii. 12), "I did bring the *remembrance* of your prayers before the Holy One," where the Greek word for "remembrance" is that which is here rendered "memorial."

6. *he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*] These words are not in the oldest MSS. In Peter's own account of the visit to Cornelius (xi. 14) we have "who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved;" and this is one of the numerous instances found in some later texts of the Acts where an attempt has been made to form a complete narrative in the earlier chapters by gathering together and adapting statements which appear in their proper place in later chapters. The prayers of Cornelius had been for more knowledge and greater light, and the angel directs him to the instructor whom he desires. The inserted words probably first appeared as a note on the margin.

7. *And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius* [him] *was departed*] The proper name does not appear in the oldest MSS. When the additional note on the last verse had found its way into the text, the name of Cornelius was placed instead of the pronoun for greater clearness. The reality of the angelic presence is strongly marked by these words which speak of his going away from the sight of Cornelius as any human being would have departed.

a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually] Better, "of them that attended on him." The soldier was attached to the personal service of Cornelius in the same way as that in which the soldiers were under that other centurion (Luke vii. 8) who could say to one, "Go," and he was obeyed.

8. *And when he had declared all these things unto them*] Omit "these" which is not in the Greek. The confidence which Cornelius placed in those who attended on him is shewn by this open communication with them at once on the subject of his vision. They had known all his former hopes and prayers, and so were fit persons to be made sharers in what seemed to be the answer.

9—16. PETER IS PREPARED FOR THEIR VISIT BY A VISION.

9. *Peter went up upon the house*] With the flat roofs of Eastern

about the sixth hour: and he became very hungry, and 10
would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into
a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel 11
descending unto him, as *it had been* a great sheet knit at
the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were 12
all *manner of* fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts,

houses, to which access could be obtained from outside without passing through the rooms of the building, the housetop formed a convenient place for retirement. It was the place chosen by Samuel (1 Sam. ix. 25—26) for his conference with Saul before he anointed him king. Cp. also 2 Sam. xi. 2.

to pray] We find that the housetop was used for religious purposes (Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5). These instances are of worship paid to false gods, but if the one worship, we may believe that the other also was performed there.

about the sixth hour] i.e. midday, and the second of the Jewish stated hours of prayer. We see from *vv.* 23 and 24 that the journey from Joppa to Cæsarea occupied more than one day, so that the vision of Cornelius took place on the day before the trance of St Peter and the messengers had time almost to accomplish their journey before the Apostle, by his vision, was prepared to receive them. The distance between the two places was 30 Roman miles.

10. *he fell into a trance*] So that the vision was seen by him only mentally, when he was rapt out of the body, and beheld all things as a man in a dream.

11. *and saw* [beholdeth] *heaven opened*] To shew him that the teaching of the vision was sent to him from God.

and a certain vessel descending unto him] The oldest MSS. omit the two last words.

as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth] The oldest MSS. only give "a great sheet let down by four corners upon the earth." The word rendered "corners" is used of the "end of a cord" in Herod. IV. 60, but it seems that for such a sense there must be added either a noun or adjective for explanation. What the Apostle saw was an extended sheet, the four corners of which were held up as it were by cords let down from the four extremities of the opened sky. The significance of the outstretched sheet, as a figure of the wide world, and the four corners as the directions into which the gospel was now to be borne forth into all the world, has often been dwelt upon.

12. *wherein were*] i.e. appeared to be in the vision.

all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts] The oldest MSS. omit the last six words. They have been inserted here that the text might more exactly correspond with what St Peter says in xi. 6 (see note on *v.* 6). The vision represented the whole animal creation. There were in it living creatures typical of each kind, not a multitude of the same sort of birds and beasts.

13 and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came
14 a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not
so, Lord; for I have never eaten any *thing that is* common or
15 unclean. And *the* voice *spake* unto him again the second
time, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common.
16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up
again into heaven.

13. *Rise, Peter; kill, and eat*] As he was hungry before he fell into the trance, here is presented the means of satisfying his hunger, and by the command in which he is directed to kill without distinction among all that he sees, this divinely-communicated abrogation of the law of Moses concerning the choice among living creatures afterwards informs his waking mind that now all the nations are to be alike included among God's people.

14. *Not so, Lord*] Cp. Ezek. iv. 14, where the prophet being shewn that the children of Israel shall eat defiled bread among the Gentiles, exclaims in words very like St Peter's: "There never came abominable flesh into my mouth." For the care with which the devout Jew observed the ceremonial distinction between clean and unclean, see Dan. i. 8—12; 2 Macc. vi. 18.

common or unclean] The oldest authorities read "common *and* unclean." The use of "common" in the sense of impure according to the Mosaic ritual is, as were the ordinances about which this language was employed, peculiar to the Jews. But it is easy to trace the steps by which the word came to be used thus. All persons who were not Jews were viewed as the "common" rabble, shut out from God's covenant, then whatever practices of these outcasts differed from those of the chosen people were called "common" things, and as these "common" things were those forbidden by the Law, all such prohibited things or actions became known as "common." Cp. Mark vii. 2, where the margin explains that "*defiled* hands" is in the original "*common* hands."

15. *And the* [a] *voice spake unto him again the second time*] coming from heaven as the first voice had come. There is no verb in the original, and it would perhaps be better to supply "came" rather than "spake."

What God hath cleansed, that call [make] *not thou common*] The heaven-sent voice revokes what had been enjoined from heaven at the giving of the Law. The power which made the restriction can remove it. That it would be removed Christ had intimated (Matt. xv. 11), "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man." The old dispensation is now to give place to the new, and Peter is taught by the vision that men are not to make such distinctions and separations for themselves. "For meat destroy not the work of God" (Rom. xiv. 20).

16. *This was done thrice*] The original has a conjunction "And" at the commencement of the sentence.

The repetition of the vision three times over was made that no doubt might remain in the Apostle's mind, and the reception of the whole into

17—24. *Arrival of the Messengers from Cornelius: Peter goes with them to Cæsarea.*

Now while Peter doubted in himself what *this* vision 17
which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which
were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's
house, and stood before the gate, and called, and asked 18
whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged
there. While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said 19
unto him, Behold, three men seek thee: arise therefore, and 20
get *thee* down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I

heaven again was designed to point out that it was a lesson which God had as directly sent as of old He sent the Law on Sinai. Cp. the repetition of Pharaoh's dream (Gen. xli. 32) and Joseph's explanation thereof. Peter would also remember when he came out of his trance the thrice-repeated charge given to him by Jesus (John xxi. 15—17), "Feed my sheep."

17—24. Arrival of the Messengers from Cornelius: Peter goes with them to Cæsarea.

17. *Now while Peter doubted* (**was much perplexed**) *in himself*] The original verb implies "to be thoroughly at a loss, and not know which way to turn." It is used (Luke ix. 7) of Herod's perplexity about Christ, when men said that John the Baptist was risen from the dead. Peter, aroused from his trance, was to apply what he had seen and heard, but he knew not how to begin the work.

stood before the gate] Literally, **at the porch**. The position of the house had been described to Cornelius (*v.* 6), and when his messengers found the details true, it must have given them confidence that their errand was to be a successful one.

18. *and called*] i.e. on some one within the house to come forth. These messengers, like Cornelius himself, were most probably Gentiles, and so might not feel justified in entering a Jewish house without giving notice of their presence.

19. *While Peter thought on the vision*] The original has a conjunction "Now" at the beginning of this verse.

Peter was turning over his difficulty in his mind, and asking what God would have him learn by this lesson about the abolition of differences in meats. And while he was thus pondering the explanation came.

the Spirit said unto him] Thus the arrival of the three men was, by the inward admonition of the Spirit, connected with his vision.

three men] The two servants and the soldier whom Cornelius had sent (*v.* 7).

20. *get thee down*] Peter was still on the housetop.

doubting nothing] The oldest texts give the verb here in the middle voice. as in Jas. i. 6, "nothing wavering," but in the parallel passage,

21 have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men
which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Be-
hold, I am he whom ye seek: what *is* the cause wherefore
22 ye are come? And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a
just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report
among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God
by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to
23 hear words of thee. Then called he them in, and lodged
them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and
24 certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the

xi. 12, it is active, and signifies "making no distinction," i.e. between Jew and Gentile. The latter was used by the Apostle when events had taught him precisely what the vision and the spiritual exhortation meant. The Spirit's teaching is given little by little as Christ had told His disciples that it should be, "He shall *guide* you (lit. lead you on the way) unto all truth" (John xvi. 13). The vision had given no hint of a journey to be taken; now Peter is informed of it, and so too when the end of the journey is reached the "nothing wavering" is shewn to mean "putting no distinction between Jews and other men," and thus the vision was made intelligible little by little and the perplexity removed.

21. *Then* (And) *Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius*] The last seven words are not in the oldest Greek texts, and are clearly an addition of later date to make the text quite clear.

22. *of good report among all the nation of the Jews*] For the almsdeeds which he did, and on account of his reverence for the true God. They say not only among the people of Cæsarea was the piety of Cornelius known, but among all the Jews.

was warned from God] There is no Greek for "from God," but the verb is one constantly used of messages from above. Thus of Joseph's warnings (Matt. ii. 12, 22), of Simeon's Divine revelation (Luke ii. 26), and of the admonitions sent to Moses (Heb. viii. 5), and to Noah (Heb. xi. 7).

to hear words of thee] i.e. to receive commandments from thee and learn what God would have him to do (cp. xi. 14). By the Jews the ten commandments are constantly called "the ten *words*," "God spake these *words*, saying," &c. (Exod. xx. 1).

23. *Then called he them in, and lodged them*] This was the first step towards laying aside the scruples to which the Jews were so much attached.

And on the morrow Peter went away with them] The best texts read "And on the morrow he arose and went forth with them."

and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him] In xi. 12 we are told they were *six* in number, and in *v.* 45 of this chapter they are called "they of the circumcision which believed." So these men were

morrow *after* they entered into Cesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25—33. *Arrival of Peter. Cornelius explains why he had sent for him.*

And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell 25
down at *his* feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him 26
up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he 27
talked with him, he went in, and found many *that were*

Jews, and Peter took them for his companions that he might, if need were, afterwards appeal to them for testimony of what was done, and to explain why he had acted as he did. No doubt they were informed by him of the message which the servants of Cornelius had brought, and the good repute of this devout man would weigh with them and make them ready to go.

24. *And the morrow after they entered into Cesarea*] Their road lay all the way along the coast, and as Apollonia was situate about halfway between Joppa and Cæsarea, it is most likely that they passed the night there.

And Cornelius waited (was waiting) *for them*] His attitude of preparation shews how convinced he was of the reality of his vision, and that God was about to give him an answer to his prayers.

his kinsmen and near friends] These we can hardly doubt were men of like mind with Cornelius in their faith and worship, and so had naturally been told of the answer which he was expecting, and invited to be present when Peter arrived.

25—33. ARRIVAL OF PETER. CORNELIUS EXPLAINS WHY HE HAD SENT FOR HIM.

25. *And as Peter was coming in*] The Greek is literally, "And as it came to pass that Peter entered," i.e. before he went in, for we read of his entrance in *v.* 27.

worshipped him] paying him the religious reverence which the supernatural direction of the angel concerning Peter would be likely to prompt. This act of obeisance in the Roman officer marks most strongly his sense that Peter was God's messenger. Such acts were not usual among Roman soldiers.

26. *But Peter took* (raised) *him up*] Cp. with the way in which Peter here declines to permit such reverence, the way in which the angel (Rev. xix. 10) refused such worship, "See thou do it not. I am thy fellowservant."

27. *And as he talked with him, he went in*] So that the previous part of the interview had been without. The action of Cornelius in thus coming forth to meet Peter is in the spirit of that other centurion in

28 come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful *thing* for a man *that is* a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that *I* should not call any man common or
29 unclean. Therefore came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent

the Gospel, who said (Luke vii. 6), "I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof." The Greek word here rendered "talked" indicates the communication made during an interview of some length. The subsequent remarks of St Peter shew us that he had been told many things by Cornelius, which are not specially mentioned, but comprehended under this word "talked."

and found (findeth) *many*, &c.] For the character of Cornelius had won him many attached friends.

28. *Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing*, &c.] It is said expressly by Maimonides, *Hilechoth Rozeakh*, &c. XII. 7, "It is forbidden to a Jew to be alone with heathens, because they are suspected of (lightly) shedding blood, nor must he associate with them on the road." And in the *Midrash Rabbah* on Leviticus, cap. 20 (*ad fin.*), there is an interesting example of the sort of ceremonial defilement which association with the heathen might bring about, "It happened that Shimeon the son of Kimkhith (who was high-priest) went out to speak with the King of the Arabians, and there came a fleck of spittle from the King's mouth upon the priest's garment and so he was unclean; and his brother Judah went in and served instead of him in the high-priest's office. That day their mother saw two of her sons high-priests." The Apostle speaks of the prohibition as a thing well known to those who heard him, and the action of the messengers of Cornelius in standing outside the house of Simon and calling out some one to question in the open air shews that they were aware of the dislike of the Jews to associate with Gentiles. We have evidence that this dislike was well known wherever the Jews resided from the words of Juvenal (XIV. 103), "Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti." So Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 5), "separati epulis, discreti cubilibus."

to keep company] Lit. "to join himself." The word is the same as in the command to Philip (viii. 29), "Go near and *join thyself* to this chariot;" and signifies intimate intercourse. The ordinary dealings of life must constantly have forced Jews to be in the company of Gentiles, but it was to be avoided if possible.

but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean] The Spirit's command "Go with them doubting nothing, for I have sent them" has taught Peter how he is to interpret the figure shewn to him in his vision.

29. *without gainsaying*] Following in faith the guidance of the Spirit, though I only saw dimly what God would have me to do.

ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said, Four days ago I 30
was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed
in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright
clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine 31
alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send 32
therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname
is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner
by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto
thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast 33
well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all
here present before God, to hear all *things* that are com-
manded thee of God.

34—43. *Speech of Peter to Cornelius and his friends.*

Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I 34
perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every 35
nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is
accepted with him. The word which *God* sent unto the 36

30. *Four days ago I was fasting until this hour*, &c.] The oldest MSS. have "Four days ago until this hour I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house." This makes the time of Peter's arrival to be after the ninth hour of the day. The prayer-service to which Cornelius refers had begun and been continued for some time before the appearance of the angel.

in bright clothing] See above, i. 10, note.

32. *who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee*] These words are not in the oldest MSS., though they are found in some very good authorities.

33. *to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*] The oldest authorities read "of the Lord." In "hear" there is implied the intention to obey. For the words which the centurion expected to hear from Peter were words "whereby he and all his house might be saved."

34—43. SPEECH OF PETER TO CORNELIUS AND HIS FRIENDS.

34. *Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*] i.e. I am now fully convinced, from what I have heard of God's angel appearing to Cornelius and from the connection of that vision with my own, that God is making Himself known to all the workers of righteousness whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

35. *is accepted with him*] i.e. is acceptable unto Him. God has no longer a chosen people, but calleth all men to repent, and will accept them.

children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is
37 Lord of all:) *that* word, *I say*, you know, which was pub-
lished throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after
38 the baptism which John preached; how God anointed
Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power:
who went about doing good, and healing all that were
39 oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we

36. *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)*] The construction and meaning of this and the two following verses are somewhat involved. The relative "which" is left out of this verse by the oldest MSS., and "God" is not represented in the Greek. So that the literal translation would be, "He (i.e. God, mentioned in the previous verse) sent the word unto the children of Israel, preaching the gospel of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all). The "word" in this verse is the message of the Messiah proclaimed by angels (Luke ii. 14) as a message of glad tidings, and of peace on earth, through the birth of a Saviour which is Christ the Lord This was first preached unto Israel as God's chosen people, but now God is the giver of remission of sins to every one that believeth on Him (see *v.* 43). The message of peace now was not only to be between God and the chosen race, but between God and the Jew and Gentile alike.

37. *that word, I say, you know*] Better, "ye know the tidings." The Greek rendered "word" here is not the same which is so translated in the previous verse. The former refers to the whole message of salvation through Christ, the latter to the tidings about Jesus which had gone abroad after the preaching of John the Baptist. These tidings Peter either assumes Cornelius and his friends to know because of the teaching which had already extended as far as Cæsarea (viii. 40), or else he has learnt that they have this knowledge about the facts of the life of Jesus from the conversation which he held with the centurion at his first arrival. Hence he says "ye know of the history of Jesus."

began from Galilee] where Christ's ministerial life commenced. See Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14.

38. *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*] It seems better to take the name "Jesus of Nazareth" as in apposition with the tidings mentioned in the previous verse, making the connection thus: Ye know the tidings, &c., "even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him," &c. This is the whole scope of what was preached, that Jesus had lived as a man in Nazareth, but yet had been God's Anointed, the Messiah, and shewn to be so by the mighty works which He did.

healing all that were oppressed of the devil] This is perhaps mentioned as shewing that the power of Jesus was to be not only over physical but over moral evil likewise, and this alone is mentioned because in the healing of the greater, the power to cure the less evil is implied.

for God was with him] As Nicodemus confessed, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him" (John iii. 2).

are witnesses of all *things* which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed 40
him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses 41
chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded 42
us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through 43

39. *And we are witnesses of all things*] Because they had been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministerial life (Luke xxiv. 48).

whom they slew and hanged on a tree] Rather (with the oldest MSS.) "whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree." For the latter part of the expression cp. v. 30 note.

40. *him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly* (gave him to be made manifest)] The literal translation implies more than the A. V. Christ was not openly shewed, but by many proofs it was made clear to those who saw Him that it was the same body, even though now glorified, which had been wounded on the cross, that was alive again.

41. *not to all the people*] For they, having rejected Moses and the prophets, who foretold Christ's coming, and the nature of His Kingdom, were not likely, as Jesus Himself had said of some others of like character, to be converted by the rising of any one from the dead.

witnesses chosen before of God] Christ Himself speaks (John xvii. 6) of the Apostles as given unto Him by God.

even to us] Cp. 1 Cor. xv. 6—8.

who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead] See Luke xxiv. 42, 43. And in the narrative John xxi. 12—15 it is to be inferred, especially from the last verse, that Jesus Himself partook of the food which He gave to the rest.

42. *And he commanded us to preach unto the people*] This was among the commandments alluded to Acts i. 2. Compare the charge given by Christ, Matt. xxviii. 19, where the wide commission "Go ye, teach all nations," is one that anticipated the preaching of the Gospel not only to Cornelius, but to all other Gentiles.

that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead] Cp. Christ's words to the Jews (John v. 22, 27), "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son," "and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man."

43. *To him give all the prophets witness*] Cp. Isa. xlix. 6, "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Also Joel ii. 32, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." So that under the Law the redemption of the Gentiles was seen afar off. The way in which St Peter

his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44—48. *The Holy Ghost is sent upon Cornelius and his friends, and they are baptized.*

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell
45 on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured
46 out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered
47 Peter, Can any *man* forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as
48 we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

uses the Jewish Scriptures to enforce his arguments is an evidence that Cornelius and his household were familiar with those writings.

44—48. The Holy Ghost is sent upon Cornelius and his friends, and they are baptized.

45. *they of the circumcision*] The six Jewish Christians mentioned in xi. 12 as companions of St Peter.

46. *For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God*] The same kind of manifestation of God's gifts was here made as in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. See ii. 11.

47. *Can any man forbid water*, &c.] Though the gift of the Spirit has been made so apparent, yet St Peter does not omit the outward sign which Christ had ordained (Matt. xxviii. 19) for the admission of members into His Church.

as well as we] Thus does he recognize that God had chosen Gentiles as well as Jews, and given the same grace to each.

48. *And he commanded them to be baptized*] Peter seems to have refrained from baptizing converts, and we know that St Paul did so, and the latter indicates a reason which may have influenced all the twelve to appoint others to baptize, lest factions should arise, and men sever the Christian unity by calling themselves by the name of some one of the Apostles. Cp. 1 Cor. i. 13—16.

in the name of the Lord] The oldest MSS. have "in the name of Jesus Christ."

Then prayed they him to tarry certain days] It is probable that Peter consented to stay (see xi. 3), and thus shewed that he was prepared to act according to the teaching of the vision. We know that afterwards (Gal. ii. 11—13) he wavered in his determination, and was rebuked by St Paul for so doing; but even the account of that rebuke shews us that Peter had laid aside his Jewish prejudices in a great degree, and had

1—18. *The Judæo-Christians blame Peter. He makes his defence at Jerusalem.*

And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard 11
that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And 2
when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of
the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest 3

only acted, in the way which was blamed, through the influence of some still strict Jews who had come from Jerusalem to Antioch. St Luke is not to be supposed to be ignorant of that wavering action of St Peter because he does not mention it. For a similar Christian reticence, in a like case, see xiii. 13 and note there.

XI. 1—18. THE JUDÆO-CHRISTIANS BLAME PETER. HE MAKES HIS DEFENCE AT JERUSALEM.

1. *the apostles and brethren...heard*] The news reached them before the return of St Peter to Jerusalem.

that the Gentiles had also received the word of God] At this news, had there been no additional information about Peter's eating with Cornelius, the disciples would have rejoiced, and would have welcomed this further spread of the word, as they did (viii. 14) the conversion of the Samaritans, but to some, who were not only Christians, but strict observers of Jewish ritual, it was a cause of offence that Peter had consented to become the guest of a Gentile.

2. *they that were of the circumcision*] This must have been the whole Church, at the time when the event occurred, for there were no Christians as yet except Jews and proselytes, but St Luke's narrative was compiled at a time when "they that were of the circumcision" had become a distinct party, and when their influence had begun to work division in the Christian societies. He therefore employs a name which when he wrote was full of significance, although it had its origin only in the circumstances to which he here applies it. Those who had been born Jews and knew of Jesus as conforming to the Law, and who had not heard of Peter's vision nor seen the gift of the Holy Ghost to Cornelius and his friends, as those who had been with Peter had done, were to be pardoned, if their scruples caused them to question the conduct of the Apostle at this time; yet when they heard his story they were satisfied (see *v.* 18), but many Jewish Christians elsewhere continued to make this subject a cause of contention. See xv. 1.

contended with him] The verb is a very significant one. It is the same that is used with a negative in x. 20, xi. 12, "nothing doubting," and xv. 9, "making no difference." The thought of these men who contended was that the difference between Jew and Gentile should still be maintained, and that any close fellowship (such as was involved in living at the same board) with those who accepted Christianity otherwise than through the gate of submission to the Mosaic Law, should be avoided. As the Jews in Cæsarea had (x. 22) behaved towards Cornelius, before he became a Christian, so would the Judaizing feeling have prompted

4 in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But
Peter *rehearsed the matter* from the beginning, *and* ex-
5 pounded *it* by order unto them, saying, I was in the city of
Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain
vessel descend, as *it had been* a great sheet, let down from
6 heaven by four corners; and it came *even* to me: upon
which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and
saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and
7 creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard a voice
8 saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said,
Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any
9 time entered into my mouth. But *the* voice answered me
again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not
10 thou common. And this was done three times: and all
11 were drawn up again into heaven. And behold, imme-
diately there were three men already come unto the house
12 where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. And the Spirit
bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these
six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the

the Church of Christ to deal with him still. And when we think on the prejudice which, by generations of ceremonial observance, had grown up among the Jews, we cannot wonder greatly at what they did. A whole nation is not brought to a change of feeling in a day.

3. *Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised*] The expression shews the strength of feeling against what Peter had done. The men with whom he had mixed are not called Gentiles, but the uncircumcised, the word of greatest reproach in the mouth of a Jew.

and didst eat with them] Among men with whom there would be no regard to the character of the food, nor to the way in which it was prepared.

4. *But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them*] Better, "But Peter began and rehearsed the matter in order unto them."

6. *I considered*] Better, "I beheld."

11. *And behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was*] With the oldest MSS. read, "And behold immediately three men stood before the house in which we were."

12. *nothing doubting*] The oldest MSS. give "making no difference." On this change of the verb from the middle to the active voice, and for a reason why Peter, after having been at Cæsarea and having heard the statement of Cornelius and seen the gift of the Spirit, adopted this form in his address at Jerusalem, see x. 20 note.

Moreover [And] *these six brethren accompanied me*] Those who had been his companions to Cæsarea were brought by Peter to Jerusalem,

man's house: and he shewed us how he had seen an angel 13
in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to
Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who 14
shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall
be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell 15
on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered 16
I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed
baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the
Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like 17
gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus
Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When 18
they heard these *things*, they held their peace, and glorified
God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted
repentance unto life.

that their testimony might support his statement, and that they might declare to the Church what they had seen. The change in the number of the verb in *v.* 11, "we were" for "I was," which has the support of the best MSS., makes it probable that these brethren were his companions in the journey which he was making "throughout all quarters" (ix. 32), and so were lodging with him at Simon's house in Joppa.

13. *and he shewed us how he had seen an angel*] The Greek has "and he related to us how he had seen *the* angel." Before St Peter made this defence, and long before St Luke put it down in the Acts, the story of Cornelius and his vision would be well known, and so the definite article would be used in speaking of it, i. e. "*the* angel" of whom all men had heard.

said unto him] The oldest MSS. omit the last two words.

Send men to Joppa] "Men" is omitted in the best MSS. This is one of the numerous insertions by which a repetition of a narrative in this book has been brought into exact verbal accord with the previous form. There have been times when devout men thought much of this verbal accord. It is therefore worth notice that the writers of the N. T. disregarded it utterly. The words in such a solemn inscription as that above the Cross differ in all the four Gospels, and St Peter, when in the Second Epistle (i. 17) he speaks of the heavenly voice heard at the Transfiguration, varies verbally from each of the accounts of the Evangelists.

15. *at the beginning*] i.e. at the feast of Pentecost.

16. *the word of the Lord*] Recorded above, i. 5.

17. *who believed*] The words refer alike to "them" and to "us," and so the two cases are made parallel, as in *v.* 15. For just as in the case of Peter and the Apostles, their faith was existing before the gift of the Spirit, so in Cornelius and in his companions there existed a degree of faith, or there could have been no sincere prayer offered by them.

18. *they held their peace*] But though those who heard the account of St Peter were satisfied that God had called Gentiles as well as Jews,

19—26. *Further spread of the Gospel as far as Antioch.*

19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but
20 unto *the* Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake
21 unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number be-

there were others who, some perhaps with a real but misguided zeal for the Law, some, as St Paul says (Gal. vi. 13), from vain-glory, maintained the necessity for the observance of the older covenant, and hence arose dissensions in the Church from a very early time.

19—26. FURTHER SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL AS FAR AS ANTIOCH.

19. *about Stephen*] See above, viii. 1.

as far as Phenice [Phœnicia] The district in which were the important towns of Tyre and Sidon. See *Dictionary of the Bible.*

Antioch] The capital city of Syria, about 16 miles from the sea-coast, on the river Orontes. It was the residence of the Roman proconsul of Syria. St Paul made this his starting-point in all his three missionary journeys. For its history see *Dictionary of the Bible.*

unto the Jews only] For they had not been warned, as Peter was, that the time was come to carry out Christ's prophetic command (Acts i. 8) to its fullest extent.

20. *And* [But] *some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene*] in whose minds, from their more cosmopolitan education, there was less scruple about mixing with Gentiles than existed among the Jews of Palestine, the home of the nation, and by consequence the stronghold of their prejudices.

spake unto the Grecians] The best MSS. have *Greeks*, and this is clearly the correct reading. The N. T. uses *Hellenistæ*=Grecians, to mean those Jews who had been born abroad and spoke the Greek language, or else for proselytes, but *Hellenes*=Greeks, when the heathen population is spoken of. Now it is clear that it would have been no matter of remark had these men preached to Greek-Jews, for of them there was a large number in the Church of Jerusalem, as we see from the events related in chap. vi. 1, and most probably these Grecian and Cyprian teachers were themselves Greek-Jews; but what calls for special mention by St Luke is that they, moved perhaps by some spiritual impulse, addressed their preaching in Antioch to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

21. *And the hand of the Lord was with them*] The expression is a common one in the O. T. to express the direct interposition of God in the affairs of the world. Cp. Exod. xiv. 31, "And Israel saw that great work [Heb. *hand*] which the Lord did upon the Egyptians." So the Egyptian magicians (Exod. viii. 19), "This is the finger of God."

lieved, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these 22
things came unto the ears of the church which was in
Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that *he* should go
as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen 23
the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted *them* all, that
with purpose of heart *they* would cleave unto the Lord.
For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and 24

22. *Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem*] Better more literally, "And the report concerning them, &c.," i.e. concerning these Gentile converts. These events took place, and were known to the Church in Jerusalem, before they heard of the visit of Peter to Cornelius. But what had happened at Antioch caused the Church no disturbance, because we read of no such breaking through the restrictions of the ceremonial Law as was made in Cæsarea when Peter took up his abode with Cornelius. The Jewish preachers mingled no further with the Gentiles to whom they preached at Antioch than the intercourse of everyday life forced them to do constantly.

and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch] The oldest MSS. omit "that he should go." He was sent forth, as Peter and John before had been sent into Samaria (viii. 14), to confirm and give the sanction and direction of the mother Church to the work which had begun at a new centre. Barnabas being a native of Cyprus would most likely be well known to the Cyprians who were preaching at Antioch, and so he was a most fit person to be selected for this errand.

23. *and had seen the grace of God*] exhibited in the faith, and consequent turning to Christ, of these Gentiles.

was glad] He saw nothing in the new movement which could call for disapproval, and that more members should be added to the Church was a source of joy.

and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart (in the purpose of their heart) *they would cleave unto the Lord*] Their determination was at present formed, and they had turned to the Lord; the purport of Barnabas' exhortation was that continuing in the same determination they should hold fast their faith and allow nothing to shake their attachment to Christ. The heathen converts to Christianity had much to endure for Christ's sake, and to the weak there were many temptations to relapse.

24. *full of the Holy Ghost and of faith*] The same character is given to Stephen (vi. 5), and a man of like character with that most eminent among the Greek-Jews would exert much influence in Antioch, where Greeks and Greek-Jews were the chief part of the population. It was in consequence of the persecution after Stephen's death that these preachers had come to Antioch, and some of them were probably of those Grecians who had been forward in the work for which Stephen was martyred.

of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.
25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:
26 and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people, and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

27—30. *Agabus at Antioch foretells a famine, and in consequence the Church at Antioch sends relief to Jerusalem.*

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto

and much people was added unto the Lord] The sanction of the Church of Jerusalem to what had been done, as it was given by the joy and encouraging words of the "Son of Consolation," would quicken the zeal of these already earnest labourers for Christ.

25. *Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus*] The oldest MSS. omit "Barnabas." Read, "And he went forth to Tarsus."

for to seek Saul] that he, to whom the Lord had appeared, and who had been marked as a "chosen vessel" (ix. 15) to bear the name of Christ before the Gentiles, might come with him to share in this new work of preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch.

26. *a whole year*] This long period, spent with success in the first field where the preaching to the Gentiles had begun, will account for the constant return to Antioch after each missionary journey of the Apostle of the Gentiles. He had preached at Damascus and at Jerusalem, but it was always with his life in his hand. At Antioch he first found a quiet Church with a wide scope for all his earnestness.

and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch] It is most probable that this name was given them by the heathen in ridicule. The disciples of Jesus never give it to themselves, and as the use of it would imply that those who bore it were the followers of the Messiah, the Christ, it is certain it would not be given to them by the Jews. The reason for a new distinctive term is apparent. When these new Gentile converts were joined to the Church of Antioch, none of the former distinctive appellations would embrace the whole body. They were no longer all Nazarenes or Galilæans or Greek-Jews, and as to the people of Antioch they probably seemed a strange medley, they would not be unlikely to apply to them such a hybrid form as "Christian," a Greek word with a Latin termination. The name is probably used in mockery by Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 28), "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian," but in the only other and later instance of the use of the name in the N.T. (1 Pet. iv. 16) we can see that what had been at first a taunt had soon come to be a name in which to glory, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed."

27—30. AGABUS AT ANTIOCH FORETELLS A FAMINE, AND IN CONSEQUENCE THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH SENDS RELIEF TO JERUSALEM.

27. *And in these days*] i.e. while the Church at Antioch was being

Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, 28
and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth
throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days
of Claudius Cesar. Then the disciples, every man accord- 29
ing to his ability, determined to send relief unto the

increased with a great multitude of Gentile converts, during the year's residence there of Barnabas and Saul.

came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch] That there should be prophets in the Church was but the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel which Peter had quoted in his Pentecostal sermon (ii. 17). We cannot gather from the N. T. records any clear description of what office is to be understood by the word "prophet." The men to whom it is applied are sometimes occupied in preaching and explaining the Word of God, and sometimes have the power of foretelling future events, as Agabus did here. See Acts xiii. 1, xv. 32, xix. 6, xxi. 9, 10; Rom. xii. 6; 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, 29, xiii. 2, 8, xiv. 6, 29—37.

28. *one of them named Agabus*] He is mentioned again xxi. 10, where by a significant action, as well as by his words, he foretells the imprisonment of St Paul at Jerusalem.

and signified by the Spirit] So too xxi. 11, the words of Agabus are, "Thus saith *the Holy Ghost*, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle."

great dearth] This famine is mentioned by Josephus (*Antiq.* xx. 2. 5), who tells how Helena, queen of Adiabene, being at Jerusalem, succoured the people by procuring for them corn from Alexandria and a cargo of figs from Cyprus. The date of this severe famine was A. D. 45.

throughout all the world] Though one region might be specially afflicted by the failure of its crops, all the rest of the Roman empire would be sure to suffer in some degree at the same time, and especially when famines were, as at this time, of frequent recurrence.

in the days of Claudius Cesar] The oldest MSS. omit "Cæsar." The reign of Claudius (A.D. 41—54) was remarkable for the famines with which various parts of the empire were afflicted. The first, second, fourth, ninth and eleventh years of this Emperor's reign are recorded as years of famine in some district or other. See Suetonius, *Claudius*, 28; Tacitus, *Ann.* XII. 43; Josephus, *Antiq.* XX. 2. 5, Dio Cassius IX. p. 949, Euseb. *H. E.* II. 8.

29. *Then the disciples*] i.e. of the Church of Antioch.

relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea] No doubt the Christian Church in Judæa would be much impoverished. At first the poorer converts had been sustained by the common fund, but persecution had driven away great numbers of the Christians, and those would be most likely to depart who possessed means to support themselves in other places. Thus the mother-church would be deprived of those members who were best able to give relief in such a severe time of distress.

30. *to the elders*] The Greek word = *presbyters*. This is the first time we come upon the term in the Christian history. In xx. 17 they are again

30 brethren which dwelt in Judea: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

1—12. *Herod's persecution of the Church. Peter's miraculous deliverance from prison.*

12 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his*
2 hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James
3 the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw

mentioned and there called "presbyters," though in the same narrative (*v.* 28) they are termed "overseers," *episcopoi*, i.e. bishops. No doubt at first the office of elder or presbyter comprised, beside the work of teaching, the general oversight of one, or it may be more, Churches. As the Church increased in numbers these duties were separated and the general superintendence and control assigned to one who was called overseer or bishop.

by the hands of Barnabas and Saul] The character and labours of these had marked them out as the most fit men to be bearers of this help, and it was from Jerusalem that Barnabas had been sent at first to Antioch.

XII. 1—12. Herod's persecution of the Church. Peter's miraculous deliverance from prison.

1. *Now about that time*] The events here narrated must have shortly preceded Herod's death, and so the chronological note here given must refer to some date near A.D. 43.

Herod the king] This was Herod Agrippa I. He was the son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great. See *Dictionary of the Bible*.

stretched forth his hands to vex (injure) *certain of the church*] Agrippa, according to Josephus (XIX. 7. 3), was anxious to be esteemed a devout Jew: "He loved to live continually at Jerusalem, and was exactly careful in the observance of the laws of his country. He therefore kept himself entirely pure, nor did any day pass over his head without its appointed sacrifice." Such a man might easily be roused, by the Jews whom he was so anxious to please, to the perpetration of cruelties upon the Christians.

2. *And he killed James the brother of John*] One of the two sons of Zebedee, who had been among the three specially favoured disciples of Jesus. It is therefore likely that he would take a leading part in the labours of the Church, and so Agrippa's attention would be drawn to him as a proper person to be first struck down. All the accusations which had been laid against Stephen, that the Christian leader spake against the Temple and the Law, would be used with effect to such a zealous observer of Mosaic ritual as Herod Agrippa was.

with the sword] This was the third in order of the modes of execution appointed among the Jews. These are stoning, burning, decapitation,

it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.) And when he 4
had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people. Peter there- 5

and strangulation. In connection with the execution of James the words of the Mishna are interesting: "The manner of putting to death by the sword is as follows: the man's head is cut off with the sword as is wont to be done *by royal command*." See Surenhusius on *Sanhedrin* p. 238 (misprinted 248), where there is a discussion about the position of the prisoner, whether he should stand erect or have his head on a block.

3. *And because he saw it pleased the Jews*] Which was so great an object with him. This Josephus notices (*Antiq.* XIX. 7. 3), for, comparing Agrippa with the Herod who ruled before him, he mentions that the latter "was more friendly to the Greeks than to the Jews," in which matter he says Agrippa "was not at all like him."

he proceeded further to take Peter also] The Greek is a rendering of a common Hebrew form. Literally, "*he added* to take Peter also." Peter was the other most conspicuous figure among the twelve, for John, as in his Gospel he keeps himself from view under the designation "that other disciple" (John xx. 2, 3, xxi. 20, 23), so in the work of the early Church he is but little noticed after the first persecution at Jerusalem.

Then were the days of unleavened bread] Literally, "and those were," &c. The expression refers to the whole feast, as may be seen from Luke xxii. 1, "The feast of unleavened bread, which is called the Passover."

4. *And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison*] To keep him a prisoner till the termination of the feast.

and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep [guard] *him*] A quaternion was a set of four men, which number was at one time occupied in the work of the guard, two soldiers being chained to the prisoner, and two keeping guard outside. These latter are called (*v.* 10) "the first and second ward." There were four such sets appointed to have charge of Peter, one company for each of the four watches by day and by night.

intending after Easter (the Passover)] The rendering "Easter" is an attempt to give by an English word the notion of the whole feast. That this meaning and not the single day of the Paschal feast is intended by the Greek seems clear from the elaborate preparation made, as for a longer imprisonment than was the rule among the Jews. Peter was arrested at the commencement of the Passover feast (14th of Nisan), and the king's intention was to proceed to sentence and punish him when the feast was at an end on the 21st of Nisan.

to bring him forth to the people] that they might take notice of the zeal for Judaism which would be shewn by the sentence passed upon Peter. The verb is employed by St Luke about the trial of Jesus (Luke xxii. 66), "As soon as it was day... they *led him into* their council."

fore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without
6 ceasing of the church unto God for him. And when Herod
would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was
sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and
7 *the* keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold,
the angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in
the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him
up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from
8 *his* hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and

5. *Peter therefore was kept in prison*] Another indication of the longer duration of the imprisonment, and that he was not arrested on the day of the Paschal sacrifice with the purpose of being brought forth on the morning of the 15th of Nisan, as some have maintained.

but prayer was made without ceasing [**earnestly**] *of the church unto God for him*] The same Greek word is used in the description of our Lord's prayer (Luke xxii. 44), "Being in an agony he prayed *more earnestly*." The prayers of the Church were offered by assemblies of Christians meeting in various private houses (see *v.* 12), for the persecution would now render public Christian services dangerous, as we know was often the case in the early days of Christianity.

6. *And when Herod would have brought him forth*] Literally, "was about to bring him forth," and this should be expressed, because it is an additional note of the delay and lapse of time between the arrest and the intended punishment.

and the keepers before the door] Read, "and guards before the door," i.e. the two soldiers of the quaternion who were not chained to the prisoner.

7. *And behold, the* [an] *angel of the Lord came upon him*] The verb is the same which is used (Luke ii. 9) of the angel appearing to the shepherds. The idea conveyed is that the heavenly visitor appeared over those to whom he was sent. The passage just quoted continues "and the glory of the Lord shone round about them," words which are strikingly parallel with this description of St Peter's release, "and a light shined in the prison."

in the prison] The word is not the same as in the last verse. To make the distinction clear read here "cell" or "chamber." The light was due to the presence of the angel who came with the glory of the Lord.

and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up] Rather, **roused** him up. The verb indicates that he awoke him from his sleep, but not that he helped him to arise.

8. *Gird thyself*] A binding up of the loose Oriental robe, so as to be fit for expeditious movement. Thus the Passover was to be eaten (Exod. xii. 11) as if by persons prepared to depart at once. So Gehazi was bidden (2 Kings iv. 29) to make himself ready for his journey to the house of the Shunammite.

bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And 9
he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, 10
they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to 11
himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered *the thing*, he came 12
to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

Cast thy garment about thee] The Greek word signifies the outer dress as distinguished from the under tunic.

10. *When they were past the first and the second ward*] i.e. the warders, who were stationed one nearer to the inner door of the prison and another at some further distance away.

they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto [into] *the city*] This description, with the words which immediately follow about the street into which they came, make it probable that the prison in which Peter was kept was in the midst of the city.

which opened to them of his own accord] It is better to discard in sentences like the present the old English form "his" and read "its." "His" was good and almost the only English use when the A. V. was made, but is now obsolete.

For the expression "of its own accord" cp. Lev. xxv. 5, "That which groweth of its own accord;" Wisdom xvii. 6, "A fire kindled of itself," where, as here, what is meant is that there was no human agency employed in what was done.

the angel departed from him] Leaving the other steps, in which supernatural aid was unnecessary, to be taken by the Apostle of himself.

11. *And when Peter was come to himself*] This and other subjective features of the narrative shew that the account must have been derived from St Peter himself. No one else could describe the astonishment and the after realization that all was truly enacted and no vision.

all the expectation of the people of the Jews] Whose gratification at the death of James had been great, and who now hoped to see another of the Apostles put to death.

12. *And when he had considered the thing*] Rather, "when he comprehended it." At first he had been "like them that dream" (Ps. cxxvi. 1) at his deliverance from captivity, but at length his mind grasped the whole truth and he could act upon it.

Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark] This Mary

13—19. *Surprise of the brethren, and anger of Herod.*

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel
14 came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew
Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran
15 in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they
said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed
16 that it was *even* so. Then said they, It is his angel. But
Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the*

was sister to Barnabas, as we learn Col. iv. 10, where Mark is called sister's son to Barnabas. This relationship accounts for the way in which the uncle clung to his nephew, even when St Paul declined to have Mark as a companion on their second proposed missionary journey. We do not read of the father of Mark anywhere, so it is probable that Mary was a widow, and, like her brother, was possessed of means which enabled her to put a house, or a part thereof, at the service of the Church, as a meeting-place for prayer.

gathered together praying] The Greek has "*and* praying." The introduction of the conjunction seems to indicate not that this was a special or solitary occasion when the disciples were gathered at the house of Mary, but rather that this house was a place in which such gatherings were usual, and at the time when Peter was delivered such an assembly was there and making supplication (*v.* 5) for his deliverance.

13—19. SURPRISE OF THE BRETHREN, AND ANGER OF HEROD.

13. *at the door of the gate*] The first named is the wicket which was opened for anyone's admission; the second is the porch into which admission was obtained by the small door.

a damsel came to hearken] Perhaps we have here a trace of the danger which at this time surrounded the disciples from this zeal for Judaism on the part of Herod. Saul had entered into every house and carried off men and women to prison (viii. 3), and there was a prospect of a like persecution. So Rhoda was not minded to open till she knew who was seeking for admission.

14. *And when she knew Peter's voice*] We know that his speech was the cause of his being recognized on a previous occasion (Matt. xxvi. 73).

she opened not the gate for gladness] Cp. with this action the description of the disciples (Luke xxiv. 41) when they recognized Jesus, "they believed not for joy."

15. *she constantly affirmed*] i.e. confidently, with determination; which was the old meaning of the word in the A. V. Cp. Frith, *Workes, Life*, fol. 3, "he so *constantly* defended himself, that he had prevailed, if he might have been heard."

It is his angel] The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 14) expresses in part the opinion of the Jews concerning angels when he

door, and saw him, they were astonished. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, *Go* shew these *things* unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place. Now as soon as it was day, there was no small

17

18

asks, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The Jewish belief was that each man had a guardian angel assigned to him. Cp. *Midrash Rabbah* on Eccles. iv. 4, where it is said that "six hundred thousand of the angels of the presence came down on Sinai at the giving of the Law, and each one bore a crown to crown Israel, one for each Israelite." Cp. also our Lord's language (Matt. xviii. 10).

17. *the Lord had brought him out of the prison*] Which had been his exclamation when he came to himself, "The Lord hath sent his angel."

Go shew] There is only one verb in the Greek, which signifies "to bear word." This the A.V. has attempted to render fully by the two verbs.

unto James] This is no doubt the James who is afterwards (xv. 13) described as presiding over the council at Jerusalem concerning circumcision, and giving his sentence on that question. Thus he seems to have been at the head of the Church at Jerusalem, and to him it was natural for Peter to send the first news of his deliverance.

This James must have been either the son of Alphæus or the James who is one of the Lord's brethren, but it is not easy to decide whether the persons called by these names were one and the same. It seems however safest not to identify the Apostle, James the son of Alphæus, with the Lord's brother, for these brethren of Jesus did not believe in Him till a very late period of His ministerial life, long after the twelve were chosen. But the James in our narrative is probably the Lord's brother, because St Paul gives to the James who was one of the pillars of the Church at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 9) when St Paul visited that city, the express title of "the Lord's brother" (Gal. i. 19). This James, bishop of Jerusalem, was, as we learn from a tradition preserved by Eusebius (*H. E.* II. 23), cast down from the pinnacle of the Temple, whither the Jews had brought him, in the expectation that he would disown Christ. When, on the contrary, he still held to his belief, he was thrown down, and not being killed by the fall, was slain by a blow from the club of a fuller.

and to the brethren] Though it was in the middle of the night when his deliverance took place, Peter sends to the various centres where, as in the house of Mary, prayer was also being offered to God for his deliverance.

went into another place] The peril of death was so imminent, if he had been seized, that he takes refuge by hiding where he cannot be found. The times are altered since the day when after his former

19 stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found *him* not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and *there* abode.

20—25. *Death of Herod Agrippa I. Growth of the Church.*

20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and having

deliverance he could dare to go and speak in the day-dawn to the people in the Temple. Then the populace were a protection to the Church, and saved them from violence of the authorities, now the Jewish people are in expectation of a second execution.

18. *stir among the soldiers*] For the guards who had been chained to the prisoner would discover as soon as they awoke, that he had escaped from between them, and they would know that their lives would probably answer for the life of Peter.

19. *commanded that they should be put to death*] The Greek is literally, "commanded that they should be led forth," implying however that such a proceeding was the prelude to their execution. It is the verb so often rendered "lead away" in the accounts which the Gospels give of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.

And he went down from Judea to Cesarea, and there abode] By Caligula there had been conferred on Herod Agrippa the tetrarchies of Herod, Philip and Lysanias mentioned Luke iii. 1. He afterwards received the tetrarchy of Antipas, and was honoured with the title of king. He therefore, and not a Roman governor, was in power at Cæsarea at this date, for Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* XX. 8. 2) that he had received from Claudius Judæa and Samaria, in addition to the districts over which he had ruled under Caligula.

20—25. Death of Herod Agrippa I. Growth of the Church.

20. *And Herod was highly displeased*] The oldest MSS. omit *Herod*. Read, "Now he," &c. The verb implies a deep-seated feeling of anger. It is not found elsewhere in the N.T.

with them of Tyre and Sidon] They were still seats of maritime industry, and perhaps Herod's regard for the people of Berytus (*Beyrout*), another Phœnician seaport a little north of Sidon, may have been connected as cause or effect with his anger at the people of the two older cities. Josephus (XIX. 7. 5) gives an account of splendid buildings which this king provided for Berytus. It is clear that the way in which the royal anger had made itself felt was one which interfered with the commercial prosperity of Tyre and Sidon.

but they came with one accord to him] i.e. they joined in a common

made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's *country*. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal 21
apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, *saying, It is* the voice 22
of a god, and not of a man. And immediately *the* angel 23
of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But 24

embassy and sent persons from both towns to make representations and use their influence to appease Herod's anger.

Blastus the king's chamberlain] Probably, as his name implies, some Roman who had taken office under this Eastern king who rejoiced in the favour of the Roman Emperor.

desired (asked for) *peace*] We are not to understand from these words that Agrippa was making *war* on Tyre and Sidon, but only that he was on unfriendly terms with them and was impeding their trade.

nourished by the king's country] The extent of Herod's rule was very great, and if he encouraged another port, and made regulations by which traffic was diverted from the towns of Tyre and Sidon, it was in his power to take away from them at least one-half of the commerce which was their support.

21. *And upon a set day*] The day was one appointed (as Josephus tells us) for holding a festival on which to make vows for Cæsar's safety.

Herod, arrayed (having arrayed himself) *in royal apparel*] See the extract from Josephus given below.

23. *And immediately the* (an) *angel of the Lord smote him...and he was eaten of worms*] Cp. the fate of Antiochus Epiphanes (2 Macc. ix. 9), and Herod the Great's death (Josephus, *Ant.* XVII. 6. 5). The passage in which Josephus describes these events is so important in its bearing on the N. Test. narrative that it deserves to be read in its entirety. He writes (*Antiq.* XIX. 8. 2), "Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judæa, he came to the city Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower, and there he exhibited shows in honour of Cæsar, upon his being informed that there was *a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety*. At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons and such as were of dignity throughout his province. *On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver* and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning, at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflexion of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a dread and shuddering over those that looked intently upon it, and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place and another from another (though not for his good) that he was a god. And they added '*Be thou merciful to us*, for although we have hitherto reverenced thee only as a man yet shall *we henceforth own thee as superior to*

mortal nature.' Upon this the King *did neither rebuke them nor reject their impious flattery.* But as he presently afterwards looked up he saw an owl sitting upon a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A violent pain also arose in his belly, having begun with great severity. He therefore looked upon his friends and said, 'I whom you call a god, *am commanded presently to depart this life*, while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I who was called by you immortal *am immediately to be hurried away by death.* But I am bound to accept what *Providence allots as it pleases God*, for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner.' *When he had said this his pain became violent.* Accordingly he was carried into the palace, and the rumour went abroad everywhere that *he would certainly die in a little time*..... And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his bowels for five days he departed this life."

We can see from this extract that among the throng who flattered Herod, there were some who were suing for *mercy* to be shewn to them; that the day was a *set day*, that Herod was *clad in royal robes*, that the flattery consisted in *calling him a god*, that *he did not rebuke* them; that he was *stricken immediately* so that he had to be carried to his palace, that he acknowledged that the *stroke came from God as a rebuke for accepting such flattery*, and everybody expected him to *die at once.*

With reference to the latter portion in which Josephus speaks of a violent pain increasing in vehemence very rapidly, and the N. Test. says he was eaten of worms; it is noticeable that, in the account of the death of Antiochus, already alluded to, we have these two features of the same disease mentioned and that they are described separately. First, 2 Macc. ix. 5, "The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, smote him with an incurable and invisible plague, for as soon as he had spoken these words a pain of the bowels that was remediless came upon him and sore torments of the inner parts." Then after a verse or two describing the pride of Antiochus we read, "So that the worms rose up out of the body of this wicked man."

Josephus (by whom Herod, as one who favoured Jews, was regarded as of no bad character, and was moreover looked upon with an eye of admiration as having been raised to the highest pitch of power through Roman influence, to which Josephus himself was very ready to pay court) has merely described the form in which the malady made itself apparent at first, and has left out the more loathsome details from the death story of one who in his eyes was a great king; while Holy Writ has given the fuller account, because the object of the writer of the Acts was to emphasize in all its enormity the sin for which Josephus tells us that Herod himself felt that he was stricken. The points of accord in the two accounts are so many, and the difference so slight and so easy to be accounted for, that this extract from Josephus must always be regarded as a most weighty testimony to the historic accuracy and faithfulness of St Luke's narrative. For other instances of death by

The Eastern Mediterranean & adjacent Lands
ILLUSTRATING THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS & LAST VOYAGE
of the
APOSTLE PAUL
THE FIRST JOURNEY
The red line shows the probable course of the journey described Acts XIII to XIV. 26.
English Miles
0 50 100 200 300
Longitude East from Greenwich
Cambridge University Press.
GREAT SEA (MEDITERRANEAN)
EUXINE SEA
MACEDONIA
THRACIA
ASIA
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
Lycaonia
Pisidia
PAMPHYLIA
CILICIA
Mt. TAURUS
Lydia
Phrygia
Mysia
Caria
Lycia
CRETE
CYPRUS
SYRIA
Phoenice
Palestina
Idumæa
Arabia
EGYPT
LIBYA
Delta
Pentapolis
Cyrene
The Quicksands
Alexandria
Jerusalem
Antioch
Tarsus
Iconium
Lystra
Derbe
Ephesus
Troas
Philippi
Thessalonica
Athens
Corinth
Rome
Syracuse
Melita
Rhodes
Paphos
Salamis
Damascus
Tyre
Sidon
Ancyra
Pessinus
Philadelphia
Sardis
Smyrna
Chios
Lesbos
Samos
Miletus
Patmos
Cos
Perga
Attalia
Seleucia
Laodicea
Colossæ
Hierapolis
Philomelium
Apollonia
Amphipolis
Nicopolis
Dyrrachium
Brundusium
Puteoli
Appii Forum
Tres Tabernæ
Ariminum
Ancona
Adria
Ravenna
Aquileia
Illyricum
Dalmatia
Hadrianople
Byzantium
Chalcedon
Bosporus
Propontis
Hellespontus
Ilion
Adramyttium
Pergamos
Thyatira
Magnesia
Ephesus
Miletus
Halicarnassus
Rhodes
Patara
Myra
Cnidus
Gortyna
Lasea
Fair Havens
Phœnice
Claudia
Salmone
Messene
Sparta
Thebes
Corinth
Cenchreæ
Delphi
Nicopolis
Actium
Epirus
Thessalia
Larissa
Pella
Amphipolis
Thessalonica
Edessa
Berœa
Apollonia
Samothracia
Neapolis
Philippi
Nestus
Strymon
Hæmus M.
Rhodope M.
Olympus
Ida
Tmolus
Cadmus M.
Taurus
Amanus
Lycus
Halys
Iris
Amasia
Pteria
Tavium
Ancyra
Gates of Syria
Issus
Callan
Tarsus
Seleucia
Daphne
Berœa
Laodicea
Arabus
Tripolis
Heliopolis
Berytus
Mt. Hermon
Ptolemais
Mt. Carmel
Cæsarea
Samaria
Antipatris
Joppa
Jerusalem
Gaza
Bostra
Petra
Pharan
Sinai
Shore
Sirbonis
Pelusium
Arsinoe
Eolian Is.
Regium
Mt. Etna
Sicily
Italy
Campania
Tarracina
Putcoli
Venusia
Tarentum
Brundusium
Adriatic Sea
Ionian Sea
Mediterranean Sea

the word of God grew and multiplied. And Barnabas and 25
Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and took with *them* John, whose surname was Mark.

1—12. *Beginning of Saul's first Missionary journey. He visits Cyprus.*

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch cer- 13
tain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen,

this loathsome malady, see Herodotus IV. 205; Eusebius VIII. 16; Tertullian *ad Scapul.* III. A similar account is given of the death of Philip II. of Spain.

24. *But the word of God grew and multiplied*] Cp. vi. 7 and xix. 20. "The seed is the word," said Christ, and so the Christian historian tells us that the word was as seed, when it was cast forth diligently it waxed and brought forth fruit.

25. *And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem*] i.e. to their labours among the Gentile converts in Antioch.

when they had fulfilled their ministry [ministration] viz., the giving into the care of the Church the contributions of the disciples in Antioch for the support of their brethren in Judæa during the famine which Agabus had foretold (xi. 28).

John, whose surname was Mark] See above on *v.* 12.

XIII. 1—12. BEGINNING OF SAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY. HE VISITS CYPRUS.

1. *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch*] Rather, "Now there were at Antioch in the church that was there."

We now come to the history of those three great journeys which the Apostle of the Gentiles undertook in his special work. It is fitting that the point of departure should be Antioch, the city in which Gentiles had first in large numbers been joined to the Church, and where as yet there had risen no difficulty about the way in which they were received.

prophets and teachers] Cp. ii. 17. The prophecy of Joel was now to receive a wider fulfilment.

Simeon that was called Niger] The first name points out the man as of Jewish origin, and the second is a Latin adjective = *black*, which may have been assumed, or given to him, as a name from his dark complexion. Jews were, and are still, in the habit of having another name beside their national one, for use when they mixed among foreign nations.

Lucius of Cyrene] This name is Latin, though his birthplace or home may indicate that he was one of the Jews who abounded in Cyrene and the other parts of the North of Africa. Perhaps it is he who is mentioned in Rom. xvi. 21.

Manaen] i.e. Menahem. This name is Jewish, and is found in

which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and
2 Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the
Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the
3 work whereunto I have called them. And when they had
fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent

Josephus (*Antiq.* XV. 10. 5) as the name of an Essene who foretold that Herod the Great would become king. It may well be that the name became, when the prophecy had received its fulfilment, a favourite one among those who were attached to or favoured the rulers of the Herodian family.

which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch] Rather, "foster-brother of Herod, &c." The Vulgate gives "*collactaneus*." Herod the Tetrarch (Antipas) had a brother Archelaus by the same mother. Manaen would hardly be said to have "been brought up with" one brother and not with the other.

The various connections and nationalities of the men who are here named, are worthy to be noticed when we reflect on the work which was to have its beginning from Antioch. One a Cypriote, another a Cyrenian, another a Jew, but from his double name accustomed to mix among non-Jews, one a connection of the Idumean house of Herod, and Saul the heaven-appointed Apostle of the Gentiles, the list may be deemed in some sort typical of "all the world," into which the Gospel was now to go forth.

2. *As they ministered to the Lord*] The word is the one usually employed by the LXX. for the ministerial services in the Temple, as it is also Heb. x. 11, but the parallelism with the next verse, where the service here mentioned is described as "fasting and *prayer*," shews us that we are not to attach the former strict signification to it. Such has been the mind of the Church also, for from this verb comes our word "Liturgy." The old order is giving place to the new, and the terminology is receiving a new sense.

and fasted] as a solemn act of devotion in the prospect of the work which was before them.

the Holy Ghost said] Speaking to and through the prophets who were there.

Separate me Barnabas and Saul] Saul had from the first been a "vessel of election," and so specially severed for this work, and we can see why Barnabas, who had been the first to introduce Saul to the Church at Jerusalem, and whose education may have been very like his own, (for there was much inter-communication between Cyprus and Tarsus,) was appointed to be the sharer of Saul's labours.

for the work whereunto I have called them] As the one portion of this admonition was from the Holy Ghost, we may perhaps be warranted in concluding that the whole course of this first great missionary journey was pointed out also by the Spirit. There is no notice of a deliberation in the Church about the best way for the Apostles to set forth.

3. This verse implies a solemn dedication service at the end of the

them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, 4
departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to
Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached 5
the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they
had also John to *their* minister. And when they had gone 6
through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer,
a false prophet, a Jew, whose name *was* Bar-jesus: which 7

ministration and fasting with which the devotions of the Church had commenced.

4. *sent forth by the Holy Ghost*] A repetition which marks the solemn character which St Luke and also his informant attached to this new form of the Christian work.

unto Seleucia] which was the seaport of Antioch at the mouth of the Orontes. See *Dictionary of the Bible*.

and from thence they sailed to Cyprus] Probably, if not specially directed, the missionary Apostles were induced to take this route because Cyprus was the birthplace of one of them, and there were in the island already many Jews resident, and also some Cypriote Christians (xi. 20), who perhaps had been in Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost among the various nationalities then assembled, and who had, when driven away by persecution, turned their steps homeward and preached Jesus to their fellow-countrymen (xi. 19).

5. *And when they were at Salamis*] Salamis was the nearest port of Cyprus for voyagers from Seleucia. It is at the eastern end of the island in the bay which is now called Famagousta.

in the synagogues of the Jews] who were living in Salamis in sufficient numbers to need several synagogues.

they had also John to [as] *their minister*] This is John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas. His office may have been to baptize, from which service the Apostles seem to have refrained where it was possible (see above on x. 48). But there is perhaps also implied in the word rendered "minister" some degree of the same service which in old times Elisha rendered to Elijah (2 Kings iii. 11). The same Greek word is used for the minister in a synagogue (Luke iv. 20).

6. *And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos*] Probably teaching at other places in the same way as they had done in Salamis. Paphos was the capital of Cyprus, and therefore the residence of the Roman governor. It was the more modern city, not the old city of Paphos, to which Paul and Barnabas came. See *Dictionary of Bible*.

they found a certain sorcerer [magician], *a false prophet, a Jew*] That there were living among the Jews persons well known as pretenders to magic powers we can see from a story told T. B. *Berakhoth* 59 a, of a certain Rab Katina who, in his walk, as he was passing the door of one who was known as a professor of witchcraft and magic arts, felt a slight shock of an earthquake. He thereupon called out and asked "Does this wizard diviner know what that shock is?" Upon this the man cried with a sanctimonious promptness worthy of his profession, "In the hour when

was with the deputy *of the country*, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to
8 hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to
9 turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also

the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers His children who dwell in sorrow among the nations of the world, He lets fall two tears into the great sea, and that is the cause of the tremor of the earth." Chaldæan astrologers and impostors are mentioned by Juvenal (VI. 562; XIV. 248) and Horace (*Sat.* I. 2. 1) and by many other Latin writers, and these were probably Babylonian Jews. See Lucian, *Necyomantia*, where a wonderful story is told of a magician named Mithrobarzanes. Also Lucian, *Philopseudes*, where one of the wonder-workers is described as "a Syrian from Palestine."

Bar-jesus] This was his Jewish name. The Arabic name or title *Elymas*=wise, was a self-assumed designation; and for that reason he is called "Magus"=the magician, a name originally applied to the Persian priests, who were deemed the *wise* men of the realm both in policy and religion, though their title in after times was degraded to baser arts and persons.

7. *which was with the deputy of the country* [proconsul], *Sergius Paulus*] Under Augustus the Roman provinces were divided into two classes, one class of which (needing the presence of troops for their government, and the possession of which gave the Emperor the control of the army) was called imperatorial, while the others were called senatorial provinces. The former were governed by an officer named *proprætor*, the latter by a *proconsul*. We know from Dio Cassius (LIII. 12) that Cyprus was originally an imperatorial province, and therefore under a proprætor. This also Strabo confirms (XIV. 685), but says that Augustus made it over to the people along with Cyprus and part of Galatia, and took instead of these Dalmatia for one of his provinces. So that the government was at St Paul's visit held by a *proconsul* for the Roman Senate, as is here recorded; and this is another instance of the historic faithfulness of St Luke's record.

Of Sergius Paulus we know nothing, but the opportunities now afforded, by the English occupation of Cyprus, for the investigation of the antiquities of the island, may lead to some discovery of his name and office in coin or inscription.

a prudent man] The presence of Elymas among his staff shews that the proconsul was a man of enquiring mind, and the same is displayed by his desire to hear Barnabas and Saul.

8. *seeking to turn away* [aside] *the deputy* [proconsul] *from the faith*] Sergius had not yet accepted the doctrine of the Apostles, though we may presume that both he and Elymas had heard much about their teaching since their landing at Salamis. Report going before had roused the proconsul's curiosity and the magician's fear, and the wish of the latter was to divert the attention of Sergius, that he might not send for the new teachers.

is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* 10
child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now 11
behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately

9. *Then* [But] *Saul, who also is called Paul*] The proconsul had been determined in his purpose, and Saul had come before him. At this point we first meet the name by which the great Apostle is best known throughout the Christian Church, and many reasons have been given why he assumed this name, and why at this time. Some have thought that the name was adopted from the proconsul's, his first convert of distinction, but this is utterly alien to all we know of the character of St Paul, with his sole glory in the cross of Christ. Far more likely is he to have been attracted to it, if it were not his before, by the meaning of the Latin word (*paullus* = little) and its fitness to be the name of him who called himself the *least* of the Apostles. But perhaps he only did what other Jews were in the habit of doing when they went into foreign lands, and chose him a name of some significance (for the Jews were fond of names with a meaning) among those with whom he was about to mix. Dean Howson (*Life and Letters of St Paul*, I. p. 164) compares Jose—Jason; Hillel—Julus, and probably the similarity of sound did often guide the choice of such a name, and it may have been so with the Apostle's selection. St Luke, recognizing that the history of St Paul is now to be his chief theme and that the work for which he was separated was now begun, names the Apostle henceforth only by the name which became most current in the Churches.

filled with the Holy Ghost] So that the punishment inflicted on Elymas was dictated to the Apostle by the Spirit, and he knew from the inward prompting thereof, that what he spake would come to pass.

set [fastened] *his eyes on him*] For Elymas was standing by, doubtless ready to catch at anything which he might be able to turn to the discredit of the Apostles.

10. *enemy of all righteousness*] We may judge from this expression that St Paul recognized an earnest zeal for truth in the enquiries of the proconsul, and that his wrath against Elymas was not only for what he was doing at the present time, but for his long-continued leading astray of those who were desirous to know the ways of the Lord.

11. *the hand of the Lord*] Of the Jehovah whose ways he had perverted, for it could only have been after the Jewish faith that Sergius Paulus had made his enquiries of Elymas, who instead of teaching him to know the Lord, seduced him by his own pretensions. For the expression cp. Exod. ix. 3 and Judges ii. 15, "The *hand of the Lord* was against them for evil."

for a season] The punishment inflicted on Elymas is lighter than that of Ananias and Sapphira, because in their case the hypocrisy of their

there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about
11 seeking *some* to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy,
when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at
the doctrine of the Lord.

13—15. *The Apostles visit Pamphylia and Pisidia. Mark returns to Jerusalem.*

13 Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos,
they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing
14 from them returned to Jerusalem. But when they departed

conduct would have brought ruin on the Church, if it had not been severely punished, and their sin was against greater light and gifts of grace than had been bestowed on the magician of Cyprus.

a mist and a darkness] There is a gradation in the words which implies that the withdrawal of his sight was somewhat gradual. At first the eyes began to cloud over, and as the film increased upon them he became quite blind.

and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand] As he perceives the darkness closing in upon him he turns in the direction where he had last noticed some friend, and endeavours to get a guide. For such a man would wish to shew as little as possible how exactly the Apostle's words had come to pass.

12. *Then the deputy* [proconsul], *when he saw what was done, believed*] He was convinced by the miracle and by the words with which it was accompanied, that the Apostles were teachers of the way of the Lord after which he had been seeking in vain from Elymas. We are not told that Sergius was baptized, but we have other instances of the like omission of notice (see *v.* 48), yet as baptism was the appointed door into Christ's Church, such omission of the mention thereof should not be thought to warrant us in believing that the sacrament was neglected on any occasion.

13—15. The Apostles visit Pamphylia and Pisidia. Mark returns to Jerusalem.

13. *Now when Paul and his company*] Literally, "those around Paul." Henceforth the Apostle of the Gentiles becomes the central figure in nearly every scene of the Acts.

loosed [sailed] *from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia*] They would sail to the north-west. Pamphylia was about the middle part of the southern seaboard of Asia Minor, and Perga was its capital. We are not told of any missionary labours in Perga at this time either because there was no opening for their commencement, or it may be that the Apostles were troubled at the departure of Mark. They did preach in Perga on their return visit (xiv. 25).

and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem] There is no reason given for his departure either here or elsewhere, but the cause assigned had clearly not been one which satisfied St Paul (xv. 38). John

from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And 15 after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye* men *and* brethren, if ye have *any* word of exhortation for the people, say *on*.

16—41. *Paul's speech at Antioch.*

Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with *his* hand said, 16

Mark, most probably the same person as the writer of the second Gospel, afterwards was an earnest labourer for Christ, and St Paul (Col. iv. 10) speaks of him with affection. If St Luke knew the cause of his present withdrawal, the remembrance of his subsequent zeal sealed his lips on the subject. Cp. x. 48, note.

14. *But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia*] Better, "But they having passed through from Perga, came," &c. Pisidia lay inland to the N. of Pamphylia, and Antioch was in its extreme northern part, so that the verb "passed through" is very correct, for they crossed the whole district. Dean Howson (*Life and Epistles of St Paul*, I. 175) suggests that it was perhaps in this journey that St Paul and his companion were exposed to those "perils of robbers" of which he speaks 2 Cor. xi. 26. Pisidia was a mountainous district rising gradually towards the north, and the quotations given by Dr Howson from Xenophon and Strabo shew that there was a great deal of brigand-like life there even in these times, from which Paul and his company may have been in danger.

and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down] Though he is the Apostle of the Gentiles it is ever to the synagogue that St Paul first finds his way. For the law of Moses ought to be a better schoolmaster to bring men to Christ than the law of nature.

15. *And after the reading of the law and the prophets*] For the better understanding of what was here done, and also at the time when our Lord "stood up for to read" in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv. 16), it seems worth while to give a somewhat detailed account of the manner in which the Law and the Prophets are read by the Jews[1].

the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them] They having the control of the arrangements for calling up readers and preachers.

Ye men and brethren] Read "Brethren," see i. 16.

if ye have any word of exhortation for the people] Barnabas was called (iv. 36) "Son of exhortation," where there is the same word in the original as here. The purport of the "word of exhortation" is well seen in Heb. xiii. 22, where the writer calls his whole Epistle by that name.

16—41. PAUL'S SPEECH AT ANTIOCH.

16. *beckoning with his hand*] Cp. xii. 17, where it is explained that the gesture is to procure silence.

[1] See Excursus at the end of the Chapter.

17 Men of Israel, and *ye* that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when *they* dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought he them out of it.
18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners
19 in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to
20 them by lot. And after that he gave *unto them* judges about *the space of* four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the
21 prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe

Men of Israel, and ye that fear God] The audience consisted of born Jews and proselytes as well as perhaps some Gentiles. See *vv.* 42 and 43. When the audience and the subject and the end aimed at are so entirely in accord on all three occasions we cannot be surprised that the address of St Paul at Antioch partakes largely of the character and also of the language of those of St Peter at Pentecost and St Stephen in his defence. St Paul had heard the last of these, and the vision on the way to Damascus had taught him to speak with boldness on the truth of the resurrection.

17. *The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers*] He commends his words to their hearing by dwelling on the historic facts of their national life as God's chosen people.

18. *suffered he their manners in the wilderness*] This expression has the highest MSS. support. Yet the change of one letter in the Greek verb (reading ἐτροφοφόρησεν for ἐτροποφόρησεν) introduces a sense so much more beautiful, and at the same time so thoroughly in accord with the O. T. history and language, that it commends itself for acceptance above the Received Text. The rendering of the modified reading which has the support of many ancient authorities would be "he bare them as a nursing father in the wilderness." This is the expression in Deut. i. 31, where the LXX. have the Greek verb which this slight change would bring in here. There is no such close parallel found in the books of Moses for "he suffered their manners."

19. *seven nations*] They are enumerated (Deut. vii. 1) before the people went over the Jordan, viz. the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

In the latter part of this verse and in the next the oldest authorities read, "He gave their land for an heritage, about the space of four hundred and fifty years; and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet." This text would carry back the possession of the land to the first promise thereof at the time when Abram was called, for according to the received chronology about four hundred and fifty years elapsed between that event and the death of Joshua.

On Samuel, as *the* prophet *par excellence*, cp. iii. 24 note.

21. *Saul....., a man of the tribe of Benjamin*] And to the speaker

of Benjamin, *by the space of* forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this *man's* seed hath God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: when John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled *his* course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But behold, there cometh *one* after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose. Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not,

himself the same words applied. The forty years duration of Saul's reign is only to be gathered indirectly from Holy Writ, but Josephus (*Antiq.* VI. 14. 9) expressly states that time as the length of his reign, and as Ishbosheth, Saul's son, whom Abner set on the throne after his father's death, was forty years old when he began to reign (2 Sam. ii. 10), we may conclude that the length assigned in the text is correct.

22. *I have found David,* &c.] This sentence is a combination and adaptation from two separate verses out of the O. Test. First, "I have found David my servant," Ps. lxxxix. 20, and "The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people," 1 Sam. xiii. 14.

23. *Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus*] The word "his" has no place in the Greek text, and the oldest MSS. for "raised" read "brought."

The promise alluded to here is preserved for us in Ps. cxxxii. 11, "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy seat," and in many other similar declarations in the prophets. Cp. Zech. iii. 8—9.

24. *the baptism of repentance*] Cp. Mark i. 4.

25. *Whom think ye that I am?*] The oldest MSS. give "*What* think ye that I am?" For John's words, see John i. 20, 27; Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 7; Luke iii. 16.

26. *Men and brethren*] Read "Brethren," see i. 16, note.

to you is the word of this salvation sent [forth] The oldest MSS. read "to us, &c.," and this is quite in accord with the language of *v.* 17, "God chose *our* fathers." The Apostle through the whole address avoids, as far as may be, wounding any Jewish prejudice and so classes himself with his hearers where the subject allows him to do so.

27. *they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not*] Cp. the very similar language of St Peter at the Temple gate (iii. 17), "I wot that through ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers."

nor *yet* the voices of the prophets which are read every sab-
28 bath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. And
though they found no cause of death *in him*, *yet* desired
29 they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had
fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down
30 from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre. But God raised
31 him from the dead: and he was seen many days of them
which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who
32 are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto
you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made
33 unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their

28. *they found no cause of death in him*] These words are a part of the declaration of Pilate (Luke xxiii. 22).

29. *all that was written of him*] The Greek is rather more full, "all the things which were written of him," meaning the various prophecies which received their fulfilment in the betrayal, harsh treatment, and the other circumstances that attended on the death of Jesus.

30. *But God raised him from the dead*] This was the proof that God had now fulfilled the promise made unto Abraham and to David, that of their seed should one come, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, even as St Paul says below, by being justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. And elsewhere (Rom. i. 4) the Apostle says that Jesus "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead*."

31. *them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem*] The Apostles, and the body of Christ's followers, were drawn from Galilee, insomuch that, before the Crucifixion, Galilæans was a name by which they were known (Mark xiv. 70).

who are his witnesses unto the people] The oldest MSS. read "who now are, &c." St Paul has not mentioned the ascension of Jesus, but the addition of this word implies that He was no longer on earth that men might see Him. The Apostle also thus marks out what was the especial work of those who had been with Christ during His life.

32. *And we declare unto you glad tidings*] While the first companions of Jesus are His witnesses, we are His Evangelists, the bringers of good news.

how that the promise, &c.] Better, "of the promise," making this the direct object of the preceding verb.

33. *God hath fulfilled the same*] Better, "how that God hath," &c. The "glad tidings" are concerning the promise, and the precise message which is the cause for gladness is contained in the announcement that the promise has been fulfilled.

hath fulfilled] The verb in the original is a strengthened form and indicates "complete fulfilment."

unto us their children] The Greek order of the words is emphatic,

children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he 34
raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another 35
psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own 36
generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid

"unto their children, even us.' There are some good MSS. which read "unto our children," but this weakens the language greatly, for what the audience whom St Paul addressed would desire was a fulfilment for themselves. Their children would inherit what they received, but a promise to be fulfilled to their children would not move them so much as one of which they were to be sharers themselves.

in that he hath raised up Jesus again] i. e. from the dead. This is necessary to the Apostle's argument, which is on the resurrection of Jesus as a proof that He was the Messiah. The quotation which follows need not refer alone to the birth of Jesus into this world. He was also the first-begotten from the dead, the firstfruits of them that slept.

as it is also written in the second psalm] The reading of many good MSS. is "in the **first** psalm." What we now call the first psalm was formerly regarded as an introduction to the whole and not counted in the numbering. The quotation which follows is, according to the present order of the Psalms, taken from Ps. ii. 7.

34. *he said on this wise*] Better, "He [i. e. God] hath spoken on this wise." The words are from Is. lv. 3.

I will give you the sure mercies of David] Rather, "I will give you the holy and faithful (*mercies*) of David." There is no word for "mercies" in the original; but the word rendered "holy" is one which the LXX. have frequently used to represent the Hebrew word for "mercies." St Paul to the audience at Antioch used the Greek version, though no doubt he carried along with him the thought of the Hebrew. But having this Greek rendering as an interpretation of the "everlasting covenant" of which Isaiah speaks in the verse here quoted, he connects the "*holy* and faithful things of David" with that verse of David's Psalm (xvi. 10) which tells how God will not give his *Holy One* to see corruption.

35. *Wherefore he saith*] Better, "Because he saith." These words of Ps. xvi. which David was inspired to utter cannot refer to David, and this St Paul proceeds to shew. Cp. ii. 29—31 notes.

36. *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep*] It is possible to render the Greek, "For David, after that in his own generation he had served the will of God, fell on sleep," but the A. V. seems better. For it must be borne in mind that the contrast which most aids the Apostle's argument is that, while David's services could benefit only those among whom he lived, and could not be

37 unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he, whom God
38 raised *again*, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you
therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this *man* is
39 preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all
that believe are justified from all *things*, *from* which ye
40 could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware there-
fore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the
41 prophets; Behold *ye* despisers, and wonder, and per-
ish: for I work a work in your days, a work which
you shall in no wise believe, though a man de-
clare it unto you.

42—52. *Further preaching both to Jews and Gentiles. Jealousy of the Jews, and expulsion of the Apostles from Antioch.*

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the

extended to other generations, Christ by His resurrection, never more to die and see corruption, is a Saviour for all generations, and remission of sins through Him can be promised to every one that believeth.

38. *the forgiveness of sins*] Just as Jesus in His lifetime on earth declared that His miracles were only signs that "the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," so the Apostles preach concerning the Resurrection. Cp. x. 43, the conclusion of St Peter's speech in the house of Cornelius.

40. *lest that come upon you*] viz. a moral and spiritual overthrow as great as the destruction which the Chaldæans and Nebuchadnezzar wrought upon the land and people at the time of the Babylonish captivity to which the prophecy (Hab. i. 5) quoted in the next verse refers.

41. *Behold ye despisers*] This is the rendering of the LXX. and some other versions. The Hebrew text gives, as A. V., "Behold, ye among the heathen." The LXX. either had, or thought they had, a different text.

a work which you shall in no wise believe] It is the result of long-continued evil-doing that those who live in it grow incredulous and proof against all warnings. Their hearts are allowed to wax gross and their ears to become dull of hearing.

42—52. FURTHER PREACHING BOTH TO JEWS AND GENTILES. JEALOUSY OF THE JEWS, AND EXPULSION OF THE APOSTLES FROM ANTIOCH.

42. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought*, &c.] The oldest MSS. give, "And as they were going out of the synagogue they besought, &c." The desire was expressed by the congregation both of Jews and proselytes as they left the synagogue.

Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was 43
broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the 44
next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multi- 45
tudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those *things* which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blas-

We do not read of the Gentiles joining the throng of listeners until the next Sabbath (*v.* 44).

that these words (tidings)] The whole declaration of the Christian faith. It is not the ordinary Greek term for "word." Cp. x. 37.

the next sabbath] The Greek words differ from those below in *v.* 44, and have been rendered by some "during the intervening week." As is pointed out in the Excursus on *v.* 15, the Jewish congregations had a portion of the Law read in the synagogues not only on the Sabbath, but on the Monday and on the Thursday mornings, that they might not be for three days without hearing the Scripture. The peculiar expression in this verse may apply to the meetings in the synagogue on those days, and that then the people desired to hear once more the message which St Paul had just preached to them. As a different expression is used so immediately, for "on the next Sabbath," it is but just to suppose that the historian had some reason for the variation of his language in the two verses.

43. *religious* (devout) *proselytes*] Perhaps applied to the proselytes of righteousness as distinguished from the proselytes of the gate.

persuaded them to continue in the grace of God] as Barnabas in like circumstances had urged on the converts at Antioch in Syria (xi. 23). Here, though we have no mention of actual converts, the Apostles must have had regard to the "purpose of their hearts" when they spake to these enquirers as though they were already "in the grace of God."

44. *almost the whole city*] Shewing that the Apostles must have been diligently labouring both among Jews and Heathen during the intervening days, and giving additional probability to the explanation suggested above on *v.* 42.

45. *they were filled with envy* (jealousy)] The exclusive spirit, which was so engrafted in the Jewish race, asserted itself as soon as they saw the Gentiles gathered to hear the Apostles. The teaching of men who would admit all mankind to the same privileges, was abhorrent to them. For themselves and for proselytes they could accept a message as God-sent, and tolerate some modifications in their teaching and practice, but they could not endure that the Gentiles should be made equal with God's ancient people.

contradicting and blaspheming] The first two words are omitted in the oldest texts. See for similar conduct of the Jews at Corinth under like circumstances, xviii. 6.

46 pheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said,
It was necessary that the word of God should first have
been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from *you*, and
judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to
47 the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*,
I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that
thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of
48 the earth. And when the Gentiles heard *this*, they were
glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many
49 as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of
50 the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the
Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the

46. *It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you*] That, as Christ came first unto His own, so His messengers should declare their glad tidings first unto Jews, but if they received not the word, then it was to be proclaimed to all who would receive it.

judge yourselves unworthy] i.e. pronounce the sentence upon yourselves by your actions. Cp. Matt. xxii. 8, "They that were bidden" to the marriage supper "were not worthy." They had been deemed worthy by him who sent to call them, but had declared they were not so by their refusal to come.

47. *so hath the Lord commanded us*] And the Lord's command which the Apostle quotes is from Isaiah xlix. 6, which shews that from the prophetic times the reception of the Gentiles was made manifest in the counsels of God. Whether the words of Isaiah are referred to himself or to Christ it is clear that, along with the Jews, the Gentiles also are to be recipients of the promised blessings.

48. *and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*] In the controversies on predestination and election this sentence has constantly been brought forward. But it is manifestly unfair to take a sentence out of its context, and interpret it as if it stood alone. In *v.* 46 we are told that the Jews had judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, and all that is meant by the words in this verse is the opposite of that expression. The Jews were acting so as to proclaim themselves unworthy; the Gentiles were making manifest their desire to be deemed worthy. The two sections were like opposing troops, ranged by themselves, and to some degree, though not unalterably, looked upon as so arranged by God on different sides. Thus the Gentiles were ordering themselves, and were ordered, unto eternal life. The text says no word to warrant us in thinking that none could henceforth change sides.

50. *the devout and honourable women*] The conjunction is omitted in the best texts. Read, "the devout women of honourable estate." We read that in Damascus, and we may suppose that it was likely to be the case in other large towns and cities in which Jews abounded, the wives of the men in high position among the heathen were much

chief *men* of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But 51
they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and 52
with the Holy Ghost.

inclined to the Jewish religion (Josephus, *B. J.* II. 20. 2). These would be easily moved by the Jews to take action against the Apostles.

and the chief men of the city] As the Jews in Jerusalem had appealed to Pilate and the Roman power to carry out their wishes at the Crucifixion, so the Jews in Antioch excite their heathen magistrates against Paul and Barnabas.

out of their coasts] i.e. "from their borders." Antioch and all Pisidia was inland. But the old English "coast" was used for any borderland, and not as now for the "sea-board."

51. *shook off the dust of their feet against them*] This significant action, like that of the "shaking of the raiment" (xviii. 6), implied that those against whom it was done were henceforth left to go their own way. Cp. Neh. v. 13, Matt. x. 14.

Iconium] a city in Pisidia to the east of Antioch. It is still a large town, and preserves the trace of its old name, being now called *Konieh*. See *Dictionary of the Bible*.

52. *the disciples were filled with joy*] Rejoicing in accordance with the Lord's exhortation (Matt. v. 12) when men reviled and persecuted them, which was the very treatment which they had received in Antioch.

ON THE JEWISH MANNER OF READING THE SCRIPTURES.

The Jewish division of the Scriptures is (1) the Law, i.e. the five Books of Moses. (2) The Prophets, under which title the Jews include Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, as well as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve minor prophets. (3) The Hagiographa, containing Psalms, Proverbs, Job, the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the two Books of Chronicles. The command which enjoins the reading of the Pentateuch is found Deut. xxxi. 10, "At the end of every seven years in the solemnity of the year of release in the Feast of Tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this Law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men and women and children and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear."

This appointment which prescribes the reading of the *whole* Pentateuch on the Feast of Tabernacles was probably soon found to be impracticable, and it is not unlikely that from a very early time the people arranged to

read through the Pentateuch in seven years by taking a small portion on every Sabbath, beginning with the Sabbath after the Feast of Tabernacles in one year of release, and ending with the Feast of Tabernacles in the next year of release. Thus would they in some sort be fulfilling the commandment. That such an early subdivision of the Pentateuch into small portions took place seems likely from what we know of the later arrangements for the reading of the Law. The existence of such a plan for reading would account for *some* of the divisions which exist (otherwise unexplained) in various copies of the Jewish Law.

For (1) we learn (T. B. *Megillah* 29 b) that the Jews of Palestine broke up the Pentateuch into sections for each Sabbath in such a manner as to spread the reading thereof over three years (and a half?). They arranged no doubt that the concluding portions of their second reading should be on the Feast of Tabernacles in the year of release; and they began again on the following Sabbath. In this way they read through the whole Law twice in the seven years, and by concluding it on the Feast of Tabernacles in the year of release observed the commandment[1], and hereby may be accounted for some other of the unused subdivisions of the copies of the Jewish Law.

2. The Babylonian Jews in the 4th century after Christ, and probably much earlier, and all Jews down to this day, have the Pentateuch so divided that it is read through *once* every year, such reading beginning on the Sabbath after the Feast of Tabernacles, and concluding on the so-called last day of that Feast in the next year, the day really being the day of "rejoicing in the Law" (*simkhath Torah*). Thus they bring their reading to an end in each year, and so of course in the release-year, on the day appointed, and observe the command in this manner.

This comparatively modern, though almost universally prevailing arrangement, accounts for the present larger divisions of the Law for reading, and these divisions have each of them its proper name. For the whole Pentateuch has 54 weekly portions, one for each Sabbath. No year however contains 54 Sabbaths, and beside this, some festivals (or rather, holy convocations) may fall on the Sabbath, and when that happens the Scripture appointed for the festival is read, and not the appointed weekly portion in its sequence. In order that the whole Law may still be read through on the Sabbaths, it is provided that occasionally two weekly sections are combined and read on one Sabbath[2].

These weekly sections of the Pentateuch (*Parshioth*) are each divided into seven portions, and seven readers are called up from the congregation. These are to be (1) an Aaronite (and if such be in the congregation he may not be passed over), (2) a Levite, (3) five ordinary Israelites. These must all be males and at least 13 years and one day old. Practically, in Europe at least, though these are still called up in the congre-

[1] This arrangement is still observed partially in the Jewish "Temple" at Hamburg, founded in 1818, and there is at this moment (see *Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 7, 1879) a movement on foot for introducing a similar arrangement in the West London Synagogue of British Jews.

[2] Of course there will be less need for this arrangement in an intercalated year, which will have four sabbaths extra.

gations, they do not themselves read, but a reader is appointed to read to them. There are congregations in which as a mark of honour more than seven are called up, but this is discountenanced by some Rabbis as likely to lead to abuses.

When the reading of the Law in this manner is concluded the seventh section or part thereof is repeated, and any person may be asked to do this. Such reader is called *Maphtir*, i.e. the Haphtarist (the person whose reading terminates the reading of the Law). With this is connected the subsequent reading of the selected portions of the Prophets.

In olden times the Haphtarist was also the person invited to be the preacher, and this must have been the position occupied by St Paul at Antioch, and by Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth.

The sections of the prophets selected for Sabbath reading and called *Haphtaroth* have always some bearing upon the appointed portion of the Law for that Sabbath, e.g. with the first section of Genesis (Gen. i. 1—vi. 8), which contains the account of the Creation, there is appointed as the prophetical reading the passage (Isaiah xlii. 5—21) which begins "Thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens," &c. With the next section of the Law, which contains the history of Noah (Gen. vi. 8—xi. 32), the prophetical reading is Isaiah liv. 1—10, in which passage is found "This is as the waters of Noah unto me." The next section of the Law (Gen. xii. 1—xvii. 27) contains the history of Abraham, and the reading from the Prophets begins with Isaiah xl. 27—xli. 16, and in the passage there occurs "Who raised up the righteous man from the East, called him to his foot," &c., and a like arrangement is observed throughout the year.

On the Sabbath afternoons the Jews in their synagogues read, to three people, the first seventh of the portion of the Law which is set apart for the following Sabbath, and do so again on Monday and Thursday mornings. So that during the week this part is read four times over.

No prophetic portions are read along with this, but (T. B. *Shabbath* 116 b) in the old times, as early as the commencement of the 3rd century, we find that on the Sabbath afternoons portions of the Hagiographa were read along with this smaller section of the Law, and we cannot doubt that the same principle would be observed in their selection, and that passages similar in character to the selections from the Pentateuch would be chosen in these cases also, though we have no indication what they were[1].

Festivals and Fasts had their own portions of the Pentateuch appointed, and therewith corresponding portions of the Prophets.

On quasi-festival Sabbaths the ordinary portions of the Law were read, but beside this occasionally other additional portions of the Law were chosen for the Haphtarist to read with reference to the festival, and instead of the usual prophetical section appointed for these days, such passages from the Prophets were chosen as bore on the nature of the quasifestival.

These quasi-festivals are

(1) Should the Sabbath be (*a*) the day before the New Moon, or (*b*) the day coincident with the New Moon.

[1] Thus would be accounted for many still unexplained divisions in the Hagiographa.

Partaking of the character of a quasi-festival there is also the so-called "great Sabbath[1]," which is the Sabbath that precedes the Passover. On this day the portion of the Law to be read is neither varied nor increased, but as in (1) the appointed Haphtarah is changed for one of a suitable character. The same sort of change of the Haphtarah, but not of the portion of the Law to be read, takes place for the Sabbath between New Year and the Day of Atonement (1—10 of the month Tishri).

(2) The Maccabæan festival of the Dedication, which as it lasted for 8 days might include two Sabbaths.

(3) Four semi-festivals which are in one string.

a. The Sabbath preceding the New Moon of Adar, or coincident with that New Moon. This is called *Shekalim* (=the shekels), and the special portion of the Law then additionally read is Exod. xxx. 11—16.

b. The Sabbath before Purim (the Haman-festival) called *Zacor* =remember, for which the special additional portion of the Law is Deut. xxv. 17—19.

c. The Red Heifer Sabbath. This is a moveable semi-festival, but must fall between (*b*) and (*d*). It is a preparation of Purification for Passover, and its special additional portion of the Law is Numb. xix.

d. *Ha-Khodesh*=the month. The Sabbath preceding or coincident with the New Moon of Nisan, for which the special portion of the Law is Exod. xii. 1—20.

(4) To the above six must be added two Sabbaths if they fall in the middle holidays of the Feasts of Passover and Tabernacles, for such Sabbaths are even of a higher dignity than the other quasi-festivals.

(5) The three Sabbaths before the commemoration of the destruction of the city and Temple (1) by Titus, even as before, (2) by Nebuchadnezzar. On these Sabbaths the portion of the Pentateuch appointed for the day is retained, but prophetic portions are selected which suit the circumstances. These are known as the three "Sabbaths [commemorative] of Punishment and Troubles."

(6) Besides these there are seven Sabbaths called "Sabbaths of Consolation," for which, in the same way, special prophetic passages are read, which must all be chosen from the latter part of Isaiah (chap. xl. and after), and in the last of them probably occurred the passage (Isaiah lxi. 1), read by Jesus at Nazareth[2]. For although at present the Haphtarah from that chapter is marked to begin at *v.* 10 there are indications in some MSS.[3] that the selected portion

[1] It may be mentioned that the name "great Sabbath" is by the Italian Jews applied also to the Sabbath preceding Pentecost.

[2] That there is no anachronism, in supposing that these "Sabbaths of Consolation" were observed in our Lord's time, may be inferred from the strict way in which Jewish traditions always identify, in everything but time, the destruction of the two Temples by Nebuchadnezzar and by Titus, and the observances in connection therewith. And we take it as a further proof of the antiquity of this observance that though there are slight variations in the ordinary Haphtaroth in the various Jewish rituals, those for the "Sabbaths of Consolation" are the same in all.

[3] See a South Arabian (*Yemen*) Codex, Brit. Museum, MSS. *Oriental*, 1470.

1—7. *Preaching at Iconium. The Apostles forced to flee.*

And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went *both* 14
together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that
a great multitude both of the Jews and *also* of the Greeks
believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles,

formerly began at an earlier point, and this for coherence could hardly be elsewhere than at *v.* 1. It seems probable that in post-Christian times the verses read by our Lord have designedly been cut off from the special prophetic passage. For although any charge against the Jews of altering the *words* of Scripture on account of Christianity must be dismissed as utterly unfounded, it is on the other hand beyond question that they abolished the most ancient and hallowed custom of *reading the ten words* during the morning prayers daily, "because of the murmuring of the heretics" (*minin*), and by this word (*minin*) the Jews meant the earliest Judæo-Christians (T. B. *Berakhoth* 12 a), who, after Christ's example in the Sermon on the Mount, laid great stress on the ten commandments of the Moral Law to the depreciation of ceremonial regulations.

XIV. 1—7. PREACHING AT ICONIUM. THE APOSTLES FORCED TO FLEE.

1. *they went both together*, &c.] These words probably refer not to one special visit, but to repeated occasions on which Paul and Barnabas appeared as fellow-labourers before the Jewish congregation in Iconium.

and so spake] on various occasions, on some of which not only Jews but Gentiles were hearers of the word.

also of the Greeks] Here the word in the original is *Hellenes*, used in other places by St Luke to signify Gentiles, in contradistinction to *Hellenistæ*, by which he means Greek-Jews. It has been thought that here Greek-Jews can only be intended, and that the word must therefore be used in a sense different from that which it has in other places in the Acts. But clearly the visit of the Apostles to Iconium lasted a considerable time, and it is not to be supposed that, while there, they refrained from speaking the word in any place but in the solitary synagogue. They went, as their wont was, to the synagogue first, that was the scene of their joint labours on many occasions, and there many of the Jews were won to the faith. But they spake elsewhere the same glad tidings which they published to the Circumcision, and thus many Gentiles also were converted. This seems a simpler explanation than to make St Luke say *Hellenes* here, when he means *Hellenistæ*. The verse condenses the account of the Apostolic labours, marks that their commencement was at the synagogue, that Jews became believers, and then without further specification of a place of preaching adds "and of the Gentiles," to describe the whole result.

2. *But the unbelieving Jews*] Better, "But the Jews that were dis-

and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.
3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.
4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held
5 with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and *also* of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone

obedient." The verb is the same which is found John iii. 36, where the rendering should be "He that *obeyeth not* the Son shall not see life." The word is stronger than "unbelieving," it expresses unbelief breaking forth into rebellion, and so exactly describes the character of these Jews who were persecuting Paul and Barnabas.

made their minds evil affected] The verb is an unusual one in this sense. It is that by which the "harm" done to the Church by Herod Agrippa is described (xii. 1). It implies not only an ill disposition aroused towards the brethren, but injury also done to the minds in which the feeling was stirred up.

3. *Long time therefore abode they*] There are two results described in this and the following verse as the consequences of the Jewish opposition. First, a long stay was necessary that by the words of the Apostles and by the mighty deeds following wherewith God confirmed them, the faith of the new converts might be fully established before the Apostles departed. Secondly, there came about a division among the people, the Christians and non-Christians became distinctly marked parties.

speaking boldly] The original word expresses that "freedom of speech" for which the Apostles prayed (iv. 29), and it is to be noted that as in their prayer so in God's working, the freedom of speech is in close connection with the stretching forth of God's hand to heal, and with the signs and wonders that were done in the name of Jesus.

the word of his grace] i. e. the word of the truth of the Gospel, which is glad tidings, a word of grace. It is to be remarked that the signs mentioned here, as elsewhere, follow after the faith and do not precede it.

4. *part held with the Jews*, &c.] For a similar division see the history of the preaching at Thessalonica, xvii. 4—5. That His word should cause such division had been foretold by Jesus (Luke xii. 51).

5. *when there was an assault made*] The noun does not necessarily imply that any direct attack had been made, which, from what follows, we can see was not the case. It rather applies to the excitement, urging, and instigation which the Jews were applying to their heathen companions, and which was likely to end in violence.

with their rulers] The word is of the most general character, and it is impossible to form any conjecture from it what these authorities were.

them, they were ware of *it*, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, 6
cities of Lycaonia, and *unto* the region that lieth round
about: and there they preached the gospel. 7

and to stone them] From this we see that the prompting came from the Jews. Stoning was their mode of punishment for blasphemy, and such they would represent the teaching of the Apostles to be. We need not suppose that any regular legal stoning like that of Stephen was intended, or that to accomplish that object the rulers here mentioned were such Jewish authorities as could be gathered together in Iconium, and that they are indicated by a vague term because they had no very settled position. The previous verb "to use them despitefully" rather points to the opposite conclusion, and marks the intended proceeding as a piece of mob-outrage, for which the countenance of any authority was gladly welcomed.

In connection with St Paul's residence at Iconium, there exists a story of the conversion of a maiden named Thecla, of which the apocryphal "Acts of Paul and Thecla" represents the form into which the legend had grown in the fourth century. Thecla, who was espoused to Thamyris, is said to have been deeply affected by the preaching of the Apostle, which she accidentally heard, and when the Apostle was put in prison on the accusation of being a magician, she bribed the gaoler and visited the prisoner, and was fully instructed by him in the Christian faith. The Apostle was punished and sent away from Iconium. Thecla was condemned to die for her refusal to marry Thamyris, but was miraculously saved, and after many troubles joined St Paul in his missionary travels, and ultimately made her home in the neighbourhood of Seleucia, where she led the life of a nun till her death, which took place when she was ninety years old.

This story may at first have had some basis of truth to rest on, but it has been so distorted with inconsistent details, that it is impossible now to judge what the foundation of it may have been.

6. *they were ware of it*] Among the party which sided with the Apostles there would be some who would get information about any attack which was being planned against them. It is to be noticed that throughout the history there is no attempt to exaggerate the sufferings of the Christian teachers. Here was a narrow escape from stoning, and as such it is recorded with no more expansion than is absolutely unavoidable.

and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about] What the Apostles actually did is more truly represented if we preserve the Greek order, "fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about." From the violence of a mob excited by the Jews they fled into a wilder region where were few or no Jews, and the cities are enumerated in the order in which they were visited, while some to which they went are unnamed but included in the general term "the region round about." The flight of the Apostles is exactly in accord with Christ's injunction (Matt. x. 23).

8—18. *Cure of a Cripple at Lystra. The heathen people regard the Apostles as gods.*

8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in *his* feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never
9 had walked: the same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly

8—18. Cure of a Cripple at Lystra. The heathen people regard the Apostles as gods.

8. *And there sat a certain man*] Perhaps this cripple, like that other in Jerusalem (iii. 2), was brought by his friends to some much-frequented place that he might ask alms of them that passed by. There is no mention of a synagogue in Lystra, and it is very improbable that there was one. The Apostles therefore would seek out some place of public resort where they might proclaim their message, and such a position would also be most adapted for the purposes of a begging cripple.

at Lystra] This place lay almost south from Iconium, if the site generally assigned to it, at the foot of the *Kara-dagh*, be the correct one. See *Dict. of the Bible.* It is most probable that this was the home of Timothy. We cannot conclude this absolutely from xvi. 1, because both Derbe and Lystra are there mentioned, but in xx. 4 we have an enumeration in which are the words "Gaius of Derbe and Timotheus," where the form of the expression makes it almost certain that the latter was not of Derbe. Further, when St Paul recalls to Timothy his sufferings undergone at this period (2 Tim. iii. 10—11), he says "Thou hast fully known.....the persecutions and afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra," words which seem to connect Timothy with the last-named place, and when taken in connection with the other passages to be conclusive that Timothy did not live at Derbe.

That Timothy was made a convert to Christianity at this first visit of St Paul is plain from xvi. 1, where on the Apostle's second visit he is called "a disciple." It is also clear from the same passage (xvi. 3) that there could have been but few Jews at Lystra at this time, or else the son of a religious Jewess would hardly have remained uncircumcised till he had reached man's estate. Some, however, have thought that this may have come to pass through the influence of the Greek father of Timothy.

impotent in his feet, &c.] It is worth while to notice once again how minutely Luke, the physician, describes the nature of this and other maladies throughout the history.

9. *the same heard Paul speak*] The verb in the *Text. recept.* is here the imperfect, but some MSS. have the aorist. The former seems to be the more suitable. What happened was that the Apostles preached on several occasions, and that the lame man was at his station and heard *repeatedly* the teaching of the Gospel, and by his earnest attention and manner indicated that what was spoken had been accepted by him with faith. This attracted the attention of St Paul.

beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying in the speech

who stedfastly beholding him (fastening his eyes upon him)] The verb is common with St Luke, and is used several times of St Paul, as in xiii. 9, where he fixes his gaze on Elymas, and xxiii. 1, where he attentively beholds the council. From the context of the latter passage, in which we learn that the Apostle did not recognize the high-priest, some have thought that this straining earnest gaze, so frequently ascribed to St Paul, was due to some weakness of sight remaining ever since his blindness at the time of his conversion.

and perceiving (seeing) *that he had faith to be healed*] The man's heart shone out in his face, and the Spirit within the Apostle recognized that here was a fit object to be made, by his cure, a sign unto the men of Lystra.

10. *said with a loud voice*] i.e. raising his tone above that in which he was speaking to the rest of the people.

Stand upright on thy feet] It has been noticed in chap. iii. how different is the narration of this miracle from that wrought by St Peter at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. The two were of exactly the same character, and had the historian been giving his own words only and aiming at producing a harmony in his picture between the words and works of St Paul and St Peter, no finer opportunity could have been found than by making the narratives in these two places as much as possible alike. A careful perusal leaves the impression that the latter may have been written from personal observation (see below on *v.* 22) or from the information of St Paul, but that the former was drawn from an entirely different source, and that the historian has faithfully preserved the distinct character of the two sources from which he derived his information.

And he leaped and walked] The oldest MSS. give these verbs in different tenses. The first is aorist, as expressing one act, the upward spring, which shewed once for all that the cure was wrought; the second is imperfect, and indicates that the act of walking was continued, that he henceforth was able to exercise his new power.

11. *in the speech of Lycaonia*] Which would come more naturally to their lips than any other. The people were bilingual, and St Paul had been speaking to them in Greek. This fact may give us some additional light on the question of what the gift of tongues was, which was bestowed upon the Apostles. Clearly, from what we see here, it was not such a power as enabled them at once to understand and converse in the various dialects of all the people into whose countries they might be brought in their missionary labours. For it is manifest that neither Paul nor Barnabas understood the cry of these Lycaonians. If they had, we cannot suppose that they would have allowed a moment to elapse before they corrected the false impression which the words conveyed, and at which, when they came to know its purport, they expressed such horror. They,

of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness
12 of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul,
13 Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice

however, left the place where the multitude of listeners had been assembled, and departed to their own lodgings without any knowledge of what the mistaken people were about to do.

The gods are come down to us] Nothing was more familiar to the heathen mind than the thought of the gods assuming human shape and going about among mankind, and it has often been noticed that the scene of the legend of Baucis and Philemon related by Ovid (*Metam.* VIII. 611 seqq.), and in which Jupiter and Mercury are said to have wandered on earth and to have been received as guests by Baucis and Philemon, is laid in Phrygia, which province was close to Lycaonia.

12. *And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius*] Of course this was not known until afterwards, and St Luke in his narrative, as a Greek, gives the Greek names of the gods, *Zeus* and *Hermes*. We can understand how the heathen people concluded that if any deity came to visit them with a beneficent purpose it would be that god Jupiter whose temple was before their city and to whom therefore their chief worship was paid; and Mercury was counted as the principal attendant on Jupiter, and moreover as the god of eloquence. It was obvious, therefore, to assign that name to the chief speaker, and the name of Jupiter to that one of the two Apostles who had the more commanding presence. That St Paul was not such a figure we know from his own words, and tradition describes him as "little in height, with a bald head and crooked legs" (*Acta Apocryph.* p. 41, Tischendorf).

because he was the chief speaker] Literally, "the leader of the speech." This character is always assigned to Mercury by the heathen writers, and almost the very words of the text are used of him by Iamblichus, *de Myst. ad init.*

13. *the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city*] i.e. "whose temple was before their city." He was their tutelar divinity, and it was to his priest that the people ran with their cry, and brought him, with all the preparations for a sacrifice, to the gate of the house where the Apostles were lodged.

brought oxen and garlands] The latter were sometimes put on the heads of the victims, and sometimes used by the worshippers for their own decorations at religious rites. Probably in this case they were meant to make gay some temporary altar.

unto the gates] The word here used in the original is the same which is used for the porch or vestibule of the house of Mary the mother of John Mark (xii. 14), and that is its sense here. The Apostles were within the house, and as it was meet to offer the victims to the supposed gods in their presence rather than on the altar at Jupiter's temple, it was to the house of their host that the procession came.

with the people. *Which* when the apostles, Barnabas and 14
Paul, heard *of*, they rent their clothes, and ran in among
the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these 15
things? We also are men of like passions with you, and
preach unto you that *ye* should turn from these vanities
unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth,
and the sea, and all *things* that are therein: who 16
in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.
Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he 17
did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful sea-

14. *Which when the apostles...heard of*] As they did first from the clamour and excitement of the would-be worshippers.

ran in among the people (multitude)] The best MSS. read "sprang forth among the multitude," and this is no doubt the correct reading. They were horror-stricken at what was contemplated, and with garments rent to shew, by signs as well as by words, their repudiation of such worship, they sprang forth from the house, through the vestibule, and into the midst of the crowd, that they might put an end to the delusion of the people. Cp. 2 Kings xviii. 37, xix. 1.

15. *and preach unto you*] Literally, "bring you the good tidings," as the message must be which sets forth to men the living God in the place of dumb idols.

that ye should turn from these vanities (vain things)] "Vanity" is a name of constant use in the Old Test. for the false gods of the heathen. See 1 Sam. xii. 21.

16. *who in times past* (by-gone generations) *suffered all nations* (all the heathen) *to walk in their own ways*] God had chosen Israel only for His own people before the coming of Christ, and had given to the rest of the world no revelation of Himself except what they could read in the pages of the book of nature. But that, St Paul says, spake clearly of a careful creator and preserver of the world.

17. *he left not himself without witness*] This is the same argument which the Apostle employs (xvii. 27) to the more philosophic multitude whom he addressed on Mars' hill. God's natural teaching is meant to speak alike to all men. Cp. also the similar reasoning in Rom. i. 19, 20.

and gave us rain] The oldest MSS. read "gave *you*," and this is the more natural language, for the Apostle could not include himself among those to whom God's appeal was made through the gifts of nature only.

A few rather unusual words and forms which occur in this verse have suggested to some that we have here a fragment of a Greek poem on the bounties of nature, which the Apostle quotes, as he sometimes does quote the Greek poets, to illustrate his speech from the language familiar to his hearers. Attempts have therefore been made to arrange the words into some dithyrambic metre. But it is hardly probable that St Paul would quote Greek poetry to the people in Lycaonia, to whom

18 sons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that *they* had not done sacrifice unto them.

19—28. *Change of feeling in the multitude. Paul is stoned. The Apostles visit Derbe, and then return, by the route by which they came, to Antioch in Syria.*

19 And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned

Greek was not sufficiently familiar for them to appreciate its literature to the extent which this supposition presumes, and certainly the other quotations which he makes from Greek authors (Acts xvii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 33; Tit. i. 12) are used to much more cultured audiences.

18. *that they had not done sacrifice unto them*] i.e. "from doing sacrifice," &c.

19—28. Change of feeling in the multitude. Paul is stoned. The Apostles visit Derbe, and then return, by the route by which they came, to Antioch in Syria.

19. *certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium*] Their anger, like that of "the circumcision" in Jerusalem, was roused against the Apostles, whom they knew to be born Jews, but who were casting away the legal restraints to which they themselves clung, and so they followed them to other places and represented them no doubt as renegade Jews, and probably taught the heathen people, that what they had seen done was done by evil powers and not by beneficent ones. Some such argument they must have used. The mighty work of the cured cripple bore witness for the *reality* of the Apostles' power. It was only left, therefore, to ascribe it to evil agency, as the Jews aforetime said of Christ "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub."

who persuaded the people] Dean Howson (*Life and Epp. of St Paul*, I. 208) quotes from the Scholiast on Homer (*Il.* IV. 89—92) a passage in which the Lycaonians are described as untrustworthy, and Aristotle is given as authority for the statement. For a similar sudden change of temper in the populace, cp. the conduct of the multitude at Jerusalem just before the Crucifixion, and the sudden change of opinion in the people of Melita (Acts xxviii. 6).

and, having stoned Paul] Their jealous rage carried them to such a length that they became themselves the active agents in taking vengeance on the "chief speaker" of the two missionaries. This must be the stoning to which St Paul alludes (2 Cor. xi. 25), "Once was I stoned." And Paley (*Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 69) calls attention to the close agreement between the history of St Luke and the letter of St Paul. At Iconium St Paul had just escaped stoning; at Lystra he was stoned. The two circumstances are mentioned by the historian, only the actual suffering by the Apostle himself. Nothing but truth to guide them, says

Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, 20
he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had 21
preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned *again* to Lystra, and *to* Iconium, and Antioch,

Paley, could have brought the two writers so close "to the very brink of contradiction without their falling into it."

drew him out of the city] The stoning had not been in a place set apart for such executions, for there were few Jews in Lystra, but it had been done publicly in the midst of the city, perhaps in the place of public resort where St Paul had been wont to preach.

20. *as the disciples stood round about him*] Among these we may well believe that the young Timothy was included. Braving all danger that might attend on their act, the believers at Lystra gathered about what they deemed the corpse of their teacher, and their sorrowing thoughts were perhaps concerned how they might procure it reverent burial.

he rose up] The Greek conveys the impression that this was as a resurrection from the dead, and that the restoration of the Apostle, and his immediate exhibition of vigour, and boldness to enter again into the city, was the effect of a miracle. That one stoned and left for dead by a savage mob should revive and go about as if nothing had befallen him must have been a still more striking evidence of the mighty power of God present with these teachers than what the people had seen before in the restoration of the cripple.

and the next day he departed] Having been sheltered for the night in the house of some disciple, perhaps in that of Eunice and Lois, the mother and grandmother of Timothy, of whose faith the Apostle speaks (2 Tim. i. 5) as one who has been witness of its fruits in their lives.

with Barnabas to Derbe] Barnabas had not been an object of jealousy of the Jews. His power, though great as the "son of exhortation or consolation," was not so demonstrative as that of his fellow-Apostle. Derbe, the town to which the Apostles next went, was to the east of Lystra. We have no mention of any other places in Lycaonia than these two as visited by Paul and Barnabas, but from *v.* 6 we gather that their preaching was extended to other parts of the surrounding country.

21. *and had taught many*] Better, "and had made many disciples." Perhaps "Gaius of Derbe," whom St Luke mentions as one of Paul's companions in a subsequent journey (xx. 4), may have been one of these. This is the more probable because he is there mentioned in the same clause with Timothy, who undoubtedly was converted by St Paul during this visit to Lycaonia.

they returned again] Going back over the ground which they had travelled before, that they might provide for the spread of that seed of the word which they had imperilled themselves so greatly to sow.

22 confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting *them* to
continue in the faith, and that we must through much tri-
23 bulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they
had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed
with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom
24 they believed. And after they had passed throughout Pi-
25 sidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had
preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:
26 and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been
recommended to the grace of God for the work which they

22. *confirming the souls of the disciples*] The strengthening indicated by this word is that which Peter was charged to afford to his fellow-disciples. "When thou art converted *strengthen* thy brethren," i.e. by warnings and exhortations drawn from thy own trials and thy deliverance from them. We see that this was the purport of St Paul's charge to the Churches.

and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God] From the use of the pronoun "we" in this sentence some have thought that, although unmentioned, the writer of the Acts was present with Paul and Barnabas in this first missionary journey as well as in the others. St Luke only indicates his presence at Troas and elsewhere in the same manner (xvi. 10—12, &c.), though in those passages the mention is more conclusive than in the verse before us.

23. *elders in every church*] i.e. men who should have the oversight and care for the growth, of these infant Churches.

and had prayed with fasting] using the same solemn service at the dedication of these men to their duties which had been used when they were themselves sent forth from Antioch for their present labour (xiii. 3).

they commended them to the Lord] Cp. St Paul's parting commendation of the elders of Ephesus who had come to meet him at Miletus (xx. 32). The Lord was able here also to build these men up, and to give them an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

25. *when they had preached* (spoken) *the word in Perga*] which they do not appear to have done when they passed through it before. See xiii. 13, 14, note.

Attalia] A seaport of Pamphylia, at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes. For its history see *Dictionary of the Bible*. The Apostles had sailed, as they came from Paphos, directly to Perga, which they reached by coming some way up the river Cestrus. Now they go by land from Perga to the seacoast at Attalia, where there was more likelihood of finding a vessel in which they could sail into Syria.

26. *from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God*] Better, "had been commended." The verb is not the same as in *v.* 23, but the sense is. The old English verb "recommended" had the meaning which now belongs only to "commend."

fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened *the* door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples.

27. *and had gathered the church together*] i. e. the Christian congregation at Antioch who had been moved by the Spirit (xiii. 2) to send them forth. It was fitting therefore that to them should be made a declaration of the results of the Apostolic mission.

opened the door of faith] i. e. had made faith the ground of admission to His kingdom. It was now no longer through circumcision that men should enter in and be known as God's people, but the Gospel privileges were offered to every one that believed.

28. *And there they abode long time with the disciples*] The oldest MSS. omit "there." Render literally, "And they abode no little time with the disciples." St Paul was naturally more attached to Antioch than to Jerusalem, for here was the centre where Gentiles had first formed a Church, and where consequently he found most sympathy with his special labours.

The termination of St Paul's first missionary journey seems no unfitting place for a notice of the character of the Apostle's labours. We must assign a space of three or four years to this first mission, and as the district traversed was but small, a considerable time must have been spent at each place chosen for a centre of labour. The narrative of St Luke indicates this very clearly. He tells us (xiii. 49) how from Antioch "the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region." Again he speaks (xiii. 52, xiv. 22) of "the disciples" as though converts had been made in no small numbers. Then at Iconium he mentions (xiv. 1) that "a great multitude both of Jews and Greeks believed," and (xiv. 3) that "long time" was spent there in striving to overcome the opposition of the "unbelieving Jews," and at last the whole city appears to have been divided into two great factions. Such a result was not produced by two unknown Jewish missionaries, except after the lapse of a long time. So too at Lystra they abode long enough to gain many adherents, and form a congregation of earnest disciples. And the abundant fruit of the labours of the missionaries is clearly seen in the need for the ordination of elders, and in the provisions made for orderly church government. The language of St Paul too (xv. 36) when he speaks of revisiting "the brethren in every city where they had before preached the word of the Lord" indicates that he felt that a good foundation had been laid in the different places where they had ministered. It seems from this that the course adopted by the Apostle was to tarry in some centre of population, and continue his preaching till a sufficient number of converts had been gained to carry on the work after he left them, and till some of these were so far instructed as to be able to take oversight of the infant churches.

But it is when we read of the Christian congregations that the nar-

rative of St Luke becomes most full of interest. St Paul had been by a revelation (Acts xxii. 21) sent to be the Apostle of the Gentiles, and he testifies himself to this statement of St Luke in his Epistle to the Galatians (Gal. ii. 7). Yet the history shews him to us quite in harmony with the feelings expressed in his letter to the Romans (x. 1) as one whose heart's desire for Israel is that they may be saved; and in full accord with that language in which in the same epistle (xi. 1) he identifies himself with the children of Israel. Throughout all this missionary journey St Paul never neglects to publish the message of salvation first to his own people. No, not even after repeated rejections of his teaching. In Cyprus he and Barnabas are mentioned as going first to the synagogue at Salamis. To the Gentiles they preached with much effect, but the Jews had heard their doctrine first. At Antioch they began their mission work in the synagogue, where they took their places as members of the Jewish congregation, and were invited by the rulers to address the assembly as being brethren and of the same faith. This address, which St Luke has preserved for us in substance, echoes more than once the language of the Epistle to the Romans. If in the epistle (iii. 18) St Paul says "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law," St Luke relates (Acts xiii. 39) how he said to the Jews of Antioch in precisely similar terms, "By Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses." So too just as the Apostle explains to the Romans (x. 19) that the purpose of God had been to rouse His ancient people to jealousy by them that are no people, so to the Antiochene Jews (Acts xiii. 46) is he represented as saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should have been first spoken to you, but seeing ye judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." And the action is just in the same spirit as the language which is used in Rom. i. 16. There the Gospel is proclaimed to be the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, but the order in which it is offered is "to the Jew first and afterwards to the Gentiles."

To compare in this way the language of St Paul's chief epistle with the abstracts of his speeches in the Acts is of much importance. For some have been found to maintain that the St Paul of the Epistles is a very different teacher from the Apostle whose history is recorded in the Acts. Those passages in the letters where St Paul speaks so severely of the opposition which he experienced from the Jews have been unduly dwelt on, and the theory of two sections in the early Church (a Pauline and a Petrine party) has been widely accepted, and the Acts described as a work of late date written with a view to bring about harmony between them. We cannot therefore dwell too often on all those points in the narrative of St Luke which find a counterpart in the letters of St Paul. And the farther such a comparison be carried on the more will it be apparent that the agreement between the Apostle and the historian exists because the latter is faithful to what he saw and heard, and so his record cannot but harmonize with the spirit and words of the chief actor in the history.

1—5. *At Antioch some maintain that Gentile converts must be circumcised. A mission to Jerusalem about the question. Reception of those who were sent.*

And certain *men* which came down from Judea taught 15
the brethren, *and said*, Except ye be circumcised after the
manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore 2
Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation

XV. 1—5. AT ANTIOCH SOME MAINTAIN THAT GENTILE CONVERTS MUST BE CIRCUMCISED. A MISSION TO JERUSALEM ABOUT THE QUESTION. RECEPTION OF THOSE WHO WERE SENT.

The history now approaches that subject of controversy which was certain to arise as soon as Christianity spread beyond the limits of Palestine. The first converts to the new faith were made among the Jews, but few of them were likely to cast aside those prejudices of religion in which they had long been educated. As soon as Gentiles who had not first become proselytes to Judaism joined the Christian Church, Jewish exclusiveness received a violent shock, and there was no small danger lest the new community should be rent asunder almost at its beginning. "The covenant," by which expression the devout Jew specially meant "circumcision," was constituted a cry by Judaizing agitators, and the opposition, first brought into prominence at Antioch, proved a continuous source of trial through the whole ministry of St Paul, and has left its traces on most of the writings both of the N. T. and of early Christian literature.

1. *which came down from Judea*] The words of the new comers would derive authority from this. They would be received as the latest ordinance of the heads of the church at Jerusalem. Thus the mission of enquiry to Jerusalem was rendered necessary.

taught the brethren] These were a mixed body, composed of Jews, proselytes and Gentiles (see xi. 19, 20 and the notes there). Thus it was precisely the place where such a question would arise. Gentile converts who had not passed into Christianity by the gate of Judaism would be sure to be regarded as wanting something, by the people in whose mouths "uncircumcised" had been from old times the bitterest term of reproach. (Cp. 1 Sam. xvii. 26 and Acts xi. 3.) The tense of the verb used implies that these men were persistent in their teaching, they kept constantly to this theme.

after the manner (custom) *of Moses*] The word is found before (Acts vi. 14) "the customs which Moses delivered" and signifies those rites and usages which had their foundation in the law (cp. Luke i. 9, ii. 42; Acts xxi. 21) and so were more than a "manner" or "fashion." Cp. also John vii. 22, for circumcision as the ordinance given to the people by Moses.

ye cannot be saved] A statement likely to cause dissension and questioning among those who had just learnt (xiv. 27) that "God had opened the door of faith" (independent of the observance of the ceremonial law) "unto the Gentiles."

2. *When therefore Paul and Barnabas*] These Apostles would at

with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and
certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the
3 apostles and elders about this question. And being brought
on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice
and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and
4 they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when

once repeat their testimony of what "God had done with them" among the Gentiles, and thus become the opponents of the "men from Judæa."

dissension and disputation] The authorities of best account give a simple instead of compound noun for the last word, and it would be well rendered "questioning," (so *R. V.*) as the subject in dispute is called a "question" at the end of the verse. The first noun rendered "dissension" does not imply any angry disputation, but only a division. They took different sides in the debate.

they determined (appointed)] i.e. the brethren of the church of Antioch. The verb, as well as the whole context, shews that the mission was sent by the whole Christian community, to which the question was one of most vital importance, probably affecting a large part of their members

apostles and elders] Peter, John, and James we find were now at Jerusalem, and these seem, from other notices in the N. T. (Gal. i. 18, 19, and ii. 9), to have been the Apostles who continued to live in the holy city. These with the elders appear now as the governing body of the infant church. And Jerusalem was for the Jew, until its destruction, the place of chief authority (cp. Is. ii. 3). The overthrow of the holy city did as much as anything to help on the knowledge of the universality of the Christian religion. Those who had been bred in Judaism, could not (as devout Jews to this day do not) cast away the thought that Jerusalem is "the place where men ought to worship."

3. *brought on their way*] It was not an uncommon mark of affection or respect that a part of the church at any place should attend its chief teachers for a short way on their journeys. (Cp. *infra* xx. 38, xxi. 16.) And for the antiquity of the custom among the Jews, see Gen. xviii. 16, where Abraham brings his heavenly visitors on their way.

Among the companions of Paul and Barnabas on this journey must have been Titus, for we read of him, and the question raised about his circumcision, in St Paul's own notice of this visit (Gal. ii. 3).

through Phenice (Phœnicia) *and Samaria*] The road would take them along the coast through Berytus, Tyre and Sidon, which at this time were places of great importance, and most likely to have bodies of Christians among their inhabitants.

declaring the conversion of the Gentiles] This would naturally be St Paul's great theme. Among those who were going up to Jerusalem with him would be members of the Judaizing party, but their presence was no check on the Apostle's zeal that all men should hear of the bringing in of Gentiles to the faith of Christ. The verb used implies that he gave his story with all details, and we may be sure that he dwelt on the way in which the Spirit of God had set a seal upon the work, though the converts of whom he spake were all uncircumcised.

they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and *of* the apostles and elders, and they declared all *things* that God had done with them. But there rose up 5
certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

unto all the brethren] We see therefore that it was only some of the Jews who demanded from the Gentiles complete conformity to the Law. At Jerusalem (*v.* 5) the Judaizing party is described as 'certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed,' and the Gospel history represents the Pharisees on all occasions as determined supporters of the ceremonial law. Probably their party was most numerous at Jerusalem, where all the ritual observances could be most completely carried out. In the more remote congregations the joy over the Gentile conversions would be unalloyed.

4. *they were received of the church*] "The church" is perhaps named first because there would on such a visit be an assembly of the whole Christian body to hear the story of the missionary labours of Paul and Barnabas before the question about which they had specially been sent from Antioch came to be discussed. The account of the spreading of the faith was for all, while the question of circumcision would be discussed only by the heads of the church, and those who could speak with authority. This preliminary meeting must have lasted for a considerable time, even if only a mere abstract of the labours, sufferings and success of Paul and Barnabas were given to those who met them. Such a recital was the best introduction that could be conceived for the question which was afterwards to be discussed and legislated on.

God had done with them] The preposition (μετὰ) implies that the Apostles deemed themselves fellow-workers *with* God (cp. Mark xvi. 20), but that they were only instruments whom God employed is also shewn below (*v.* 12) where the same labours are spoken of as "what God had wrought among the Gentiles *by* (διὰ) them."

5. *But there rose up*, &c.] The margin of the A.V. takes this sentence as part of the narration of Paul and Barnabas, "there rose up, said they, certain, &c." But it is much more natural to consider them to be St Luke's account of what happened at Jerusalem. The teachers at Antioch had not been described as Pharisees though they probably were so. But in no other passage of the N.T. are the Pharisees mentioned away from Jerusalem. As soon as the Apostolic narrative was heard by the church certain of their party *stood forth from* the church body and lodged their protest against what had been done. The Pharisaic teaching concerning the necessity of circumcision was based on such passages as Is. lvi. 6, where the covenant mentioned was held to be that of circumcision. And they supported their position by such passages as Is. lii. 1, where the uncircumcised are excluded from the holy city.

saying, That it was needful] Better, "saying, *It is* needful, &c." The words are a direct utterance, and suit better so rendered with

6—12. *The Council at Jerusalem; the debate and the speech of Peter. Narration of the work of Barnabas and Paul.*

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of
7 this matter. And when there had been much disputing, Peter

St Luke's narrative, in which he is describing what occurred before the church at Jerusalem.

The visit of St Paul to Jerusalem which St Luke here describes is now generally admitted to be the same of which St Paul speaks in Gal. ii. 1—9. The chronology offers no obstacle to this conclusion, while the purpose of the visit, and the companionship of Barnabas and the persons who were at the head of the church in Jerusalem are all accordant in the two notices. In the Epistle, St Paul tells us that he took Titus with him, and nothing is more likely than that while he had the company of some members of the Judaizing party, he would also take a companion with him from among those converts on whose behalf he was making the journey. He says too that it was 'by revelation' that he went up, while the narrative of the Acts represents him as sent by the church of Antioch. But here need be no contradiction. An inward monition may have furnished the true reason why the Apostle consented to make an appeal to the central authorities in Jerusalem. St Luke would not necessarily be aware of this; it was important in St Paul's argument to the Galatians that he should mention it. (For a fuller comparison of the two notices, see Bp Lightfoot's *Ep. to Galatians*, note, pp. 122—127.)

6—12. The Council at Jerusalem; the debate and the speech of Peter. Narration of the work of Barnabas and Paul.

6. *And the apostles and elders came* (were gathered) *together*] These words refer to a formal summoning to discuss the difficult question which had been brought forward. That there was a space between the first welcome of the Apostles by the church and the assembly of the synod suits St Paul's words (Gal. ii. 2) that he explained his position "privately to them which were of reputation." This private conference was a necessary preparation for the more public discussion which alone is noticed by the history.

7. *much disputing*] [*R. V.* questioning] For the Pharisaic element would find its warmest supporters at Jerusalem. And it is to that party that the disputing must be ascribed, for it is plain, from the summing up of St James at the close of the discussion, that the other apostles were of the same mind with Paul and Barnabas, and as is said in the Epistle to the Galatians (ii. 9), "they gave unto them the right hands of fellowship."

Peter rose up] It is worth notice that Barnabas and Paul leave arguments and reasons to those who had laboured most among Jewish

rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the 8 hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; and put no difference between us 9 and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore 10 why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the

converts, and merely content themselves with telling their experience of what God had wrought through them.

Men and brethren] See note on i. 16.

a good while ago] Lit. "from early days." Alluding to the conversion of Cornelius (chap. x.) which probably took place some ten years before the meeting of this synod. This was at an early period of the apostolic ministry, and the great and numerous events which had intervened made the time seem long ago.

by my mouth] That he may not seem to be claiming a distinction for himself as the one chosen of God for this work, St Peter is careful to call himself no more than the mouthpiece of God.

8. *which knoweth the hearts*] The word is only here and in Acts i. 24, and on both occasions it is St Peter who uses it. Such witness could admit of no appeal; and God had put the uncircumcised on the same level with the circumcised by giving to them the same gifts of the Spirit.

9. *And put no difference*] i.e. made no distinction. The Apostle looks on God's testimony to the Gentiles in two lights. What was given to the new converts was the same which had been given at the first outpouring of the Spirit. And God made no mark of distinction to sever Jews from Gentiles. Faith had purified the hearts of Cornelius and his house, and the outward observances of the law of Moses were of no account when the heart was clean before Him who alone could judge of the purity thereof. In these words of his St Peter clearly agrees to all that St Paul had taught about the admission of the Gentiles.

purifying their hearts, &c.] The verb is the same which is used in the account of the vision (x. 15) "what God hath *cleansed*, &c.," and St Peter is clearly referring to that narrative.

10. *Now therefore*] When you have this evidence of how God has already accepted the Gentiles.

why tempt ye God] Men are said "to tempt God" when they distrust his guidance, and in consequence disobey his revealed will (cp. Ps. xcv. 9). So the Jews *tempted* God in the wilderness (Heb. iii. 9) when they saw His mighty works and yet murmured at His leaders: so they are said to have *tempted* Christ (1 Cor. x. 9) when they were punished by the fiery serpents; and Ananias and Sapphira are said to "have agreed to *tempt* the Spirit of the Lord," by acting as though they thought they could deceive God in their offering. From these instances the force of the question in the text will be seen. Those who should act as the Pharisaic party would recommend, would be dis-

disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to
11 bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord
12 Jesus Christ *we* shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

trusting God's knowledge of the hearts of men, and refusing to be guided by what His Spirit had made known in the conversion of Cornelius.

a yoke] So St Paul (Gal. v. 1) calls the ceremonial law "a yoke of bondage." Christ uses the word "yoke" for his own precepts, knowing that a yoke was needed for men's guidance, but He calls it "easy" (Matt. xi. 30).

able to bear] How this was felt is shewn by the Rabbinic injunction to "make a hedge about the law," i.e. so to fence in its precepts by additional regulations of their own, that there should be no chance of infringing the commandment. These additions, commandments of men, as our Lord styles them, had made the ceremonial observances into a killing load.

11. *But*] Translation fails to give the force of this conjunction. It implies an exhortation for which the remainder of the verse states the reason. But *cease now from such a course*, for we believe, &c.

through the grace of the Lord Jesus] (The most ancient authorities omit *Christ*.) It is not to our having conformed to the Jewish law, St Peter urges, that we look for salvation, but to the grace of the Lord.

even as they] i.e. in like manner as they believe. Thus the argument is: If our belief and hope are the same, and no other, than theirs, why should these new converts be urged to adopt observances which form to us no ground for our hope of salvation? In the N. T. history St Peter's name appears no more, and when we call to mind the opposition which, at the close of the first, and in the second century, was represented as existing between the teaching of Paul and Peter, we cannot think that it was without meaning that this last appearance of the Apostle of the circumcision in the Scripture story sets him before us in full accord with the Apostle of the Gentiles.

12. *Then all the multitude*] Though the apostles and elders are alone mentioned (*v.* 6) as coming together, it now appears that the assembly was a large one.

kept silence] The authority with which he could speak through whom God had first opened the door of faith to the Gentiles must have silenced opposition. For he like themselves had had prejudices to overcome before his mission to Cornelius.

and gave audience] Here the imperfect tense implies the steady continuous attention to the whole narrative of that first missionary journey of St Paul.

what miracles] The word is that usually rendered **signs**; and the two nouns are the same which occur in the prayer of the disciples (iv. 30) 'that *signs and wonders* may be done through the name of thy

13—21. *James sums up the discussion, and pronounces the decision of the Church on this controversy.*

And after they had held their peace, James answered, 13
saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath 14
declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take
out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the 15
words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will 16

holy servant Jesus.' The prayer was now being answered abundantly. It is well that the English rendering should accord in these places.

by them] See note on *v.* 4 above.

13—21. JAMES SUMS UP THE DISCUSSION, AND PRONOUNCES THE DECISION OF THE CHURCH ON THIS CONTROVERSY.

13. *James*] i.e. the brother of the Lord, and bishop of Jerusalem, see above on xii. 17.

Men and brethren] See note on i. 16.

hearken unto me] The president's summary takes no note of the "much disputing" (*v.* 7) but points out that a divine revelation had been made to Peter, and that it was accordant with the words of Old Testament prophecy. On these warrants he based his decision.

14. *Simeon* (Symeon)] This more Jewish form of the name of the Apostle Peter is found also at the commencement of St Peter's second Epistle. The Jews after they came to have much intercourse with Gentiles had frequently two forms of name, one of which was employed on religious and solemn occasions, the other in intercourse with non-Jews and in the ordinary transactions of life. Thus in the Apocrypha (1 Macc. v. 17, &c.) the name of the Maccabean prince is written *Simon*, though on his coins it stands *Symeon* (see Gesenius, *s.v.*).

how God at the first] Better, *how God did first visit*, &c. It was not *at the first*, but some time after the mission of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles that Cornelius was converted. What St Peter had narrated was the *first* acceptance of a Gentile into the church.

visit the Gentiles] In the old sense of "look upon," and generally with the accompanying notion of kindness. (Cp. Luke i. 68, 78, vii. 16; Heb. ii. 6.)

a people for his name] Thus "the chosen people" were no longer to be Jews only, and so those ceremonial ordinances which had hitherto marked out Jews from Gentiles might be seen to be unnecessary.

15. *And to this agree*] i.e. with this action on God's part the statements of His prophets are in harmony. They had foretold that it should be so. Only one prophet is here quoted, viz. Amos (ix. 11, 12), but the audience would recall other like passages, as St Paul does Rom. xv 9—12, quoting from the books of Moses, David and Isaiah.

16. *After this*] Lit. *after these things*, (so *R. V.*) It will be seen on reference to the words of Amos that the quotation here given is not

return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the
17 ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord,

made from the Hebrew, which is correctly represented by the A.V. in the book of Amos. Whether St James himself spoke at the synod in Greek, or St Luke has represented in Greek what the speaker himself uttered in Aramaic we cannot know. But the words in the text correspond very nearly with the LXX. which here (either because they read the Hebrew consonants differently or because they merely gave the sense without attempting an exact rendering), varies from the Hebrew text. Yet St Luke does not give exactly the words of the LXX. He may have quoted from memory or have modified them somewhat to adapt them to the form of his sentence. The words of the LXX. run thus, "In that day I will set up the tabernacle of David which hath fallen down, and I will build up the fallen parts thereof, and the ruins thereof I will set up, and I will build it up as the days of eternity, that the residue of men may seek (unto it) and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called saith the Lord who doeth all these things."

I will return, and will build] This is not the form of either the Hebrew text or the LXX., but it is a favourite Hebrew mode of expression to signify "I will do a thing again." Cp. Eccl. iv. 1, "I returned and considered" = I considered once again. Also Eccl. iv. 7, ix. 11. This favours the opinion that St James, in this specially Jewish synod, may have spoken in Aramaic.

the tabernacle of David] The word used by Amos signifies one of those booths used by the people at the Feast of Tabernacles, when they lived in frail dwellings in order to be reminded that God was their protector. This word may be applied to the estate of the Jews when the Deliverer should come, to indicate that they should be brought very low, but yet should find in him a Saviour.

17. *might seek after the Lord*] The Hebrew of Amos differs widely here; and in the LXX. "the Lord" is not expressed. But the Spirit enabled St James to give the full interpretation of the prophetic words. The original paints the restored tabernacle, and of course the people of David restored along with it, as possessors of the remnant of Edom and all the heathen. The nations shall be joined unto the Lord's people. The LXX., as an exposition, speaks of "the residue of men seeking unto the restored tabernacle." St James makes both clear by shewing that "to seek after the Lord" is to be the true up-building both of the house of David and of all mankind besides.

The Hebrew word for "man" is *Adam* which differs very slightly from the word *Edom*. So that the variation between "remnant of Edom" and "residue of men" may be due only to the various reading of that noun.

upon whom my name is called] An Aramaic mode of saying "who

who doeth all these *things*. Known unto God are all 18
his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my 19
sentence is, that *we* trouble not them, which from among
the Gentiles are turned to God: but that *we* write unto 20
them, that *they* abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from*

are called by my name." The expression is so translated James ii. 7 (cp. Deut. xxviii. 10, &c.).

who doeth] Here the most ancient texts connect the words of this verse with those of the following, and have nothing to represent the English "all" in *v.* 17, or "unto God are all his works" in *v.* 18, so that the sense becomes either (1) "the Lord, who maketh these things known from the beginning of the world," or (2) "the Lord, who doeth these things that were known from the beginning of the world." The first of these renderings is the more difficult to understand, and it must be taken as somewhat hyperbolic. God made known by His prophets the calling of the Gentiles in very early days, and this early revelation may be all that is intended by the stronger phrase. But the second sense seems to suit better with the context. This reception of the Gentiles seems to the Jew a new and startling thing, but God has revealed it by His prophets, and He who is doing it is but carrying out what He had known and designed from the beginning of the world.

19. *Wherefore my sentence is*] Lit. I decide. The pronoun is emphatically expressed, and indicates that the speaker is deciding with authority.

that we trouble not them] The verb is only found here in N. T., and signifies to trouble by putting obstacles in the way of another. Thus the idea of the speaker is "We will not by needless impediments deter the new converts from joining us."

which from among the Gentiles are turned to God] The same phrase is used elsewhere in the Acts (cp. ix. 35, xiv. 15, xxvi. 20), but of the converts at Antioch (xi. 21) the whole expression is "a great number *believed and turned unto the Lord*," thus shewing what constituted the true turning unto God.

20. *But that we write unto them*] The word is used primarily of a charge sent by a messenger, but also, as in Heb. xiii. 22, is often used of what is sent by letter (and hence comes the English word *epistle*), and there can be little doubt that this is the sense in the present case, for though messengers were sent, they carried with them the decision of the synod of Jerusalem in a formal manner committed to writing (*v.* 23).

that they abstain from pollutions of idols] This is explained in *v.* 29 by "meats offered (i. e. sacrificed) to idols." Of the necessity for such an injunction in the early church, where congregations were to be now composed of both Jews and Gentiles, we can judge from St Paul's argument to the Corinthians (1 Cor. viii. 1—10, x. 19), and we can also see how he would have the Gentile converts deal tenderly with the scruples of their Jewish fellow-worshippers, however needless they themselves might deem such scruples.

fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood.

The word rendered *pollutions* is unknown to classical Greek and of very rare occurrence. So far as the construction of the original is concerned, it might refer to the other forbidden things that follow "pollutions of idols and of fornication, &c." But as in the other places where the cognate is found (Dan. i. 8; Mal. i. 7, 12; Ecclus. xl. 29) it has always reference to defilement caused by food, it is better to confine the connexion in the same way here, and as in A.V. supply a preposition before the second noun, "and *from* fornication."

As the ordinance of the synod is for the settling of Jewish minds, we may understand the sort of offence which they were likely to feel from Daniel's refusal to eat of the food supplied by King Nebuchadnezzar. Meat was often sold in the markets from beasts that had been offered in sacrifice to idols, and this food and those who ate it the Jew would abhor. The Gentile converts might not be careful, when they had once come to think of the idol as nothing, and might join still in banquets with their non-Christian friends, and St Paul (1 Cor. viii. 9) supposes an extreme case, that such men might even sit down to meat in an idol-temple. If Jew and Gentile were to become one in Christ, much respect must be paid to the feelings which had been sunk deep into the minds of Israel by long years of suffering for their own idolatry.

and from fornication] This injunction must not be understood as a simple repetition of a moral law binding upon all men at all times, but must be taken in connexion with the rest of the decree, and as forbidding a sin into which converts from heathenism were most prone to fall back, and which their previous lives had taught them to regard in a very different light from that in which a Jew would see it. The Levitical law against every form of unchastity was extremely strict (Lev. xviii. and xx.), and it is probably to the observance of these ordinances that we may ascribe the persistence of the Jewish type, and the purity of their race at this day. Whereas among the heathen unchastity was a portion of many of their temple rites, and persons who gave themselves up to such impurities were even called by the names of the heathen divinities. To men educated in the constant contemplation of such a system, sins of unchastity would have far less guilt than in the eyes of those to whom the law of Moses was read every sabbath-day.

and from things strangled (lit. *from what is strangled*), *and from blood*] The prohibition of blood was made as soon as animal food was given to men (Gen. ix. 4), and it was frequently enforced in the Mosaic law (Lev. iii. 17, vii. 26, xvii. 10, 14, xix. 26). To eat blood was counted a sin against the Lord in the days of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 33), and with strict Jews it is an abomination to this day. Things strangled are not specially mentioned in the law of Moses, but that they should not be eaten follows from the larger prohibition. Lev. vii. 26 does, however, make mention of the blood of fowls, and it would be in the use of them that the eating of blood began first to be practised. And in breaking the neck of an animal the Jew held that the blood was caused to flow into the limbs in such wise that it could not be brought out even by salt. See T. B. *Chullin*, 113[a].

For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach 21
him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

22—29. *Answer and deputation sent from Jerusalem. The letter of the Synod to the Christians of Antioch.*

Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole 22

21. *For Moses of old time* (lit. **from generations of old**) *hath in every city*, &c.] Here we have the reason why these injunctions are to be laid upon the Gentile converts. It is necessary however to take the whole verse into consideration before we can decide on the force of the reason. Laying stress chiefly on the expression "from generations of old," some have thought that St James' argument meant that the Mosaic ritual having been preached for so long a time and found to be a load too heavy to bear, must now be given up, except in these specified points. Again the verse has been taken to mean that there was no need for the Christian church to legislate about the observance of the Mosaic law other than in these few points, because there was public teaching on the subject everywhere in the Jewish synagogues. Jewish Christians were therefore supplied with guidance, and would be so supplied until by degrees Judaism had entirely given place to Christianity. No doubt the Apostle contemplates the retention by the Jewish Christians of much of their old ritual, and that they would make no breach with the services of the synagogue. But in these enactments, which were apparently only for a time (since St Paul nowhere alludes to them in his Epistles), and to promote peace between Gentiles and Jews, we must remember that the Jews were regarded as the weaker brethren. And the argument of the council may be supposed to run thus: We may make this concession to the Gentiles without fear of doing any injury to the Jew. It is not probable that his feelings and prejudices will be interfered with, or the Mosaic law in its other portions set aside; 'For Moses, &c.'

being read in the synagogues] On the Jewish manner of reading the law, see additional note at the end of chap. xiii.

22—29. ANSWER AND DEPUTATION SENT FROM JERUSALEM. THE LETTER OF THE SYNOD TO THE CHRISTIANS OF ANTIOCH.

22. *Then pleased it*] The word is one often used in the official announcements of what has been decreed by authority, or of public resolutions (cp. Herod. I. 3; Thuc. IV. 118, &c.). So the more formal rendering, "**It seemed good to**," would come nearer to the force of the word.

the apostles and elders, with the whole church] So the decree was the voice of the whole church, and the deputies sent were chosen by the whole body, and it is in the name of 'apostles, elders and brethren' that the letter runs (*v.* 23).

church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed
23 Barsabas, and Silas, chief *men* among the brethren: and they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren

to send chosen men of their own company] More literally (with *R. V.*), *to choose men out of their company and send them*, which rendering makes it clear that the election of those sent was the work of the whole assembly.

with Paul and Barnabas] That the church of Antioch might have the confirmation of the decree from the lips of others beside these two, for they might be supposed to favour especially all that was considerate towards Gentile converts.

Judas surnamed Barsabas] The oldest texts give 'Judas *called Barsabbas*.' Of this man nothing more is known than what we learn from this chapter. But as Barsabbas is clearly a patronymic, it has been conjectured that he was the brother of Joseph called Barsabbas, mentioned in Acts i. 23, where the MSS. and editions have the same variation of spelling.

Silas] This is probably the same person who in St Paul's Epistles (2 Cor. i. 19; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1) and by St Peter (1 Pet. v. 12) is called Silvanus. For an account of similar contracted names cp. Winer's *Gram.* (ed. Moulton), pp. 127, 128. The mention of Silas is frequent in the Acts in this and the next three chapters. He was one of St Paul's companions in the first missionary journey into Europe.

23. *And they wrote letters by them after this manner*] From the form in which the document is here given, we should judge that the original was in Greek. A translation from a Hebrew original would hardly have begun with a greeting and ended with "Fare ye well." It seems likely that this was so too, because the population of Antioch, the chief town in Syria, would use Greek much more than Hebrew, at this date. The construction of the Greek in the beginning of this verse is not strictly grammatical, but such irregularities are not unusual in a passage which begins impersonally, as does *v.* 22.

by them (lit. *by their hand*)] This is a Hebraism. The letter was not delivered to Paul and Barnabas, but to the two ambassadors from Jerusalem. It is the oldest synodical circular letter in existence, and the only one of Apostolic times which has come down to us. Bengel suggests that it was composed by James, in the name and at the request of the assembly.

The apostles and elders and brethren] The oldest MSS. omit the second *and*, thus making the Epistle run in the name of *the apostles and elder brethren*, and this rendering is adopted in *R. V.* The conjunction of the two last words to signify 'the elders' is very unusual, and after what has been said in the previous verse about the decree expressing the voice of the whole church as well as of the apostles and elders, it seems much more in accord with the rest of the narrative

which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out 24
from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment: it seemed good 25
unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen

to adhere to the *Text. Rec.* which has a large amount of good MS. support.

in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia] As we have no mention of this decree of the synod of Jerusalem in St Paul's Epistles, we may suppose that the agitation on the subject, begun at Antioch, had spread only into Syria and Cilicia, and that the authoritative decision of the mother church quieted the controversy there, while it did not arise in the same form in other places.

24. *which went out*] These words are not represented in the Greek of some MSS., but they seem to give force to the history. The disturbing teachers had come from Jerusalem, but their want of any authority is contrasted strongly with the commission of Judas and Silas (*v.* 27). The first men *went* of themselves, the new messengers were the choice of the church.

subverting your souls] In N.T. the verb occurs only here and is not found in the LXX. In classical Greek, it is applied mostly to an entire removal of goods and chattels either by the owners or by a plundering enemy. The devastation wrought in the minds of the Gentile converts through the new teaching is compared to an utter overthrow.

saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law] The oldest authorities omit the Greek of these words, which look somewhat like a marginal explanation that has crept into the text, especially as "to keep the law" is an expansion, though of course a correct one, of the statement made in *v.* 1, about the teaching that was given. There circumcision alone is mentioned as the point on which disturbance was created.

to whom we gave no such commandment] The insertion of the italic *such* was made necessary by the presence of the clause "saying, &c." but if that be omitted, the sentence becomes a more complete disavowal of any connexion with the Judaizing disturbers. 'To whom we gave no commandment at all.' So the *R. V.*

25. *being assembled with one accord*] The words may be so rendered and passage be compared with Acts ii. 1, iv. 24, v. 12. But in those passages there is only the substantive verb εἰμί, while here γίγνεσθαι has its proper sense of "becoming." It seems therefore better and more accordant with the sense of the passage to translate 'having become of one accord' or 'having come to one accord.'

to send chosen men unto you] The participle here is not passive and so should not be referred to Judas and Silas, but to those who sent them. Render literally "that having chosen out men we should send them, &c." i.e. "to choose out men and send them." So *R. V.*

26 men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men
that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord
27 Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who
28 shall also tell *you* the same *things* by mouth. For it seemed
good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no
29 greater burden than these necessary *things;* that *ye* abstain
from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from
things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye
keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

with our beloved] The intention of the whole letter is to shew the honour which the church in Jerusalem felt was due to these missionary labourers. Hence the adjective "beloved" which in N.T. is specially applied to those who are closely united in faith and love. St Peter applies it to St Paul (2 Pet. iii. 15).

Barnabas and Paul] The name of Barnabas is put first here perhaps because he had been formerly (xi. 22) sent as a special messenger from the church in Jerusalem to Antioch.

26. *Men that have hazarded their lives*] What the English sentence leaves uncertain the Greek makes quite plain, viz. that these words refer to Barnabas and Paul and to the many dangers into which their first missionary journey had brought them (cp. xiii. 50, xiv. 2, 5, 19).

for the name] Here, as often, *name* signifies the Messianic dignity and divine authority of Jesus. They have preached everywhere Jesus as the Christ.

27. *by mouth*] The Greek has *by word*. Our modern phrase combines the two, *by word of mouth*, and is given in *R. V.*

28. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us*] A third time in this clause of the narrative from 22—29 does this official word occur, from which is derived the noun *dogma*. It had been promised that to the Apostles there should be given the Spirit of truth, who should guide them into all truth (John xvi. 13) and the historian of the Acts often speaks of them as "filled with the Spirit." They put forward therefore this unerring guide as the warrant for their decree. And as they at the suggestion of the Spirit were laying aside their longstanding prejudices against intercourse with Gentiles, they claim that the Gentiles in their turn should deal tenderly with the scruples of Jews.

no greater burden] The Jews themselves could speak thus of the load of legal observances (cp. *supra v.* 11). They had chosen out but a small part thereof, which the circumstances of the time made necessary to be observed.

29. *ye shall do well*] Not "ye shall be doing what is right," but "it shall be well with you" (*R. V.*), "you shall be in a good state."

Fare ye well] This termination and the *greeting* at the commencement of the letter are in the style of Western epistolary language. See above on verse 23.

30—35. *Reception of the letter and messengers at Antioch. Departure of Judas. Silas continues in Antioch.*

So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and 30
when they had gathered the multitude together, they de-
livered the epistle: *which* when they had read, they rejoiced 31
for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being prophets 32
also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words,
and confirmed *them*. And after they had tarried *there* a 33
space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the

30—35. RECEPTION OF THE LETTER AND MESSENGERS AT ANTIOCH. DEPARTURE OF JUDAS. SILAS CONTINUES IN ANTIOCH.

30. *came to Antioch*] An early reading preferred by recent editors is *came down*, as in Acts viii. 5, Jerusalem being regarded as the chief seat of church-government, and the centre of authority. Throughout the Bible the chosen place is always spoken of as one to which men go *up*.

gathered the multitude] An expression which shews of how great concern the question had become to the whole Christian body. The same word is used above (*v.* 12) of the assembly of Christians at Jerusalem.

31. *rejoiced for the consolation*] Barnabas "the son of consolation" (iv. 36) was a fit member of such an embassy. The consolation would be felt both by Jews and Gentiles, by the former because they knew how much was to be asked of their Gentile fellow-worshippers, by the latter because they were declared free from the yoke of Jewish observances. The noun very often signifies *exhortation*, but that sense is neither so apt here, nor is it borne out by the character of the letter, which sets forth a ground of peace and comfort, but is not hortatory.

32. *being prophets also themselves*] "Prophet" is here used in the earlier and less special sense; not as one who foretells the future, but who, being filled with the Spirit, speaks with His authority in explanation of the will of God. Judas and Silas being thus endowed were well fitted to exhort and confirm the disciples. The exhortations would be most necessary for the Gentiles who were to consent to more strict living than in times past, while the confirmation would uphold the Jews who otherwise might feel unwilling to allow the non-observance of a part of their law. The prophetic character of the speakers would give to their words the force of revelation. Such confirmation or strengthening of the brethren is the special charge laid on St Peter (Luke xxii. 32) who was to be the first preacher of Christ to the Gentiles, and had first received the lesson that what God had cleansed was not to be called common.

33. *they were let go in peace*] This is the translation of a Hebrew expression, and does not signify 'they were allowed to go quietly away,'

34 apostles. Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there
35 *still.* Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36—41. *A new Mission-journey proposed. Contention between Paul and Barnabas. They separate, and Paul with Silas goes through Syria and Cilicia.*

36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have
37 preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with *them* John, whose
38 surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with *them*, who departed from them from Pamphylia,
39 and went not with them to the work. And the contention

but "in peace" means "with a blessing or prayer for peace, as a parting word."

unto the apostles] The oldest MSS. read "*unto those that had sent them forth.*" So *R. V.*

34. This verse is omitted in many ancient MSS., and in others the Greek words vary. It may very well be a marginal note placed to explain *v.* 40, where Paul, who did not leave Antioch, is said to have chosen Silas for his companion in his next journey. Silas therefore must have remained in Antioch after Judas was gone, and such an explanation some reader put on the margin of his copy.

35. *teaching and preaching the word of the Lord*] In such a community there was need not only of setting forth Jesus as the Saviour, but of much instruction concerning the ways in which God had shewn that the Gentiles were now to be made partakers of the new covenant. So that the two verbs should not be taken one as an explanation of the other.

36—41. A NEW MISSION-JOURNEY PROPOSED. CONTENTION BETWEEN PAUL AND BARNABAS. THEY SEPARATE, AND PAUL WITH SILAS GOES THROUGH SYRIA AND CILICIA.

36. *visit our brethren*] The oldest MSS. omit the pronoun, and read *the brethren* only. So *R. V.*

37. *And Barnabas determined*] The Greek of the best MSS. gives a weaker verb "wished." The reason of Barnabas' choice was probably because Mark was his nephew (Col. iv. 10). *R. V.* renders "was minded."

whose surname was] The Greek is merely "who was called."

38. *who departed from them*] See above xiii. 14. He turned back to Jerusalem from Perga.

39. *And the contention was so sharp,...that*, &c.] More literally (with *R. V.*), *And there arose a sharp contention so that*, &c. The Greek

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was so sharp *between them*, that they departed asunder one from the other: and *so* Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being 40 recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. And 41 he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

1—12. *Paul revisits Derbe and Lystra, chooses Timothy for a companion in his mission, and circumcises him. They pass through Phrygia and Galatia, and come into Mysia and to Troas. By a vision Paul is called into Macedonia. He crosses the sea and remains some days at Philippi.*

Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and behold, a 16

word (from which our English *paroxysm* comes) intimates a temporary rather than a prolonged dispute, although it may for the time be severe. The result to the church was that two missionary journeys were undertaken instead of one. Though the Apostles might differ in their estimate of Mark, they were at one with reference to the work of the Gospel. Barnabas is mentioned no more in the Acts after this chapter. His name occurs in St Paul's Epistles, 1 Cor. ix. 6; Gal. ii. 1, 9, 13; and Col. iv. 10, in which last passage, written no doubt after the events here related, we can see that Mark had been again received as a fellow-worker by St Paul. We learn too from 2 Tim. iv. 11 and Philemon 24 that St Paul became warmly attached to him afterwards.

sailed unto Cyprus] In which island Barnabas, and it may be Mark also, was born (iv. 37). They chose therefore for their labours a district in which they were likely to have some influence.

40. *being recommended*] The more usual word in this sense in modern English is **commended**. (*R. V.*)

unto the grace of God] The best MSS. have "grace of the Lord."

41. *Syria and Cilicia*] These were the districts in which the teaching of the Judaizers had been most active, and the presence of Paul, with Silas as a representative of the church in Jerusalem, would allay all doubts and questionings, and lead to those results which are mentioned xvi. 5, the establishing of the churches, and their daily increase in numbers. This duty St Paul first discharged before he went on to visit any of the churches which himself had founded.

XVI. 1—12. PAUL REVISITS DERBE AND LYSTRA, CHOOSES TIMOTHY FOR A COMPANION IN HIS MISSION, AND CIRCUMCISES HIM. THEY PASS THROUGH PHRYGIA AND GALATIA, AND COME INTO MYSIA AND TO TROAS. BY A VISION PAUL IS CALLED INTO MACEDONIA. HE CROSSES THE SEA AND REMAINS SOME DAYS AT PHILIPPI.

1. *to Derbe and Lystra*] Thus beginning the revisiting spoken of in xv. 36. See notes on xiv. 6.

certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, *which was* a Jewess, and believed; but his
2 father *was* a Greek: which was well reported of by the bre-
3 thren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him

was there] The verb does not make it certain that Lystra, to which ἐκεῖ is most naturally referred, was the birthplace of Timothy, but only his home at the date of Paul's visit. He must however have resided there a good while to have earned the favourable report of the people both of that place and Iconium.

named Timotheus] The Timothy to whom St Paul addresses two Epistles and who was the companion of his labours in this journey until his return into Proconsular Asia (xx. 4). He was the son of a Jewish-Christian mother and his father was a Greek, whether a proselyte of the gate or not, we are not told. The mother's name was Eunice (2 Tim. i. 4) and the grandmother's Lois. Timothy is spoken of as a fellow-worker with St Paul (Rom. xvi 21). From 1 Cor. iv. 17 we find that he was St Paul's messenger to that church, and he is joined with that Apostle in the greeting of 2nd Corinthians. He also went to and fro between St Paul and the church in Thessalonica (1 Thess. iii. 2, 6) and must have been at Rome with St Paul, soon after the Apostle's arrival there, for he is mentioned in the Epistles to the Philippians (i. 1, ii. 19), to the Colossians (i. 1) and to Philemon (*v.* 1). An imprisonment which he underwent is alluded to (Heb. xiii. 23), but we cannot be certain when or where it was. According to tradition (Eus. *H. E.* III. 14) he was the first bishop of Ephesus, and is said to have suffered martyrdom at the hands of the populace (Niceph. *H. E.* III. 11).

the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed] More strictly and according to the oldest texts, "*the son of a Jewess which believed.*" (So *R. V.*) Her earnest education of her son in the holy Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15) from his early youth marks the character of the woman, and makes it probable that the husband of such a woman was at least a proselyte of the gate. Timothy's father is so little mentioned that it seems likely he had died early.

a Greek] i.e. a Gentile by birth. The word was used widely of all who were not Jews.

2. *well reported of*] The same expression is used of Cornelius (x. 22) and by Paul of Ananias (xxii. 12).

by the brethren] i.e. the members of the Christian churches. Five or six years had elapsed since the previous visit of St Paul, so that the congregations had become somewhat formed, and the characters of their more earnest members well known.

at Lystra and Iconium] Thus we can see that there was an interchange of kindly offices between the newly-founded churches.

3. *and circumcised him*] It must be remembered that the decree of the synod of Jerusalem only related to the exemption of Gentiles from circumcision. It was a very different thing for a Jew to consent to

because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. And as they went 4
through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established 5
in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the 6
region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to

become a fellow-worshipper in the Christian churches with a Gentile who remained uncircumcised, and to tolerate, at this time, the non-observance of the rite by one who was counted for a Jew. For by the Rabbinical code the child of a Jewish mother was reckoned as a Jew (T. J. *Jebamoth*, ii. 6). It was because of this prejudice that Timothy was circumcised. It could be no offence to the Gentiles, and would render the labours of Timothy more acceptable to the Jews. Because he was the child of a mixed marriage the rite had been unobserved, and so long as he did not come forward as a teacher, there would be no need felt that it should be enforced, and there would be doubtless many others of a like class. But when he was to take a share in the missionary labours of St Paul all this was altered. He would at once have been met with the objection from the Jews, that he who had been but a bad Jew was not likely to guide others right as a Christian teacher. That St Paul saw no inconsistency in what was done in this matter is clear, for the narrative of St Luke tells us in the next verse that to the churches to which they went forth he delivered the decrees of the synod at Jerusalem.

4. *they delivered them*] i.e. they gave to the Gentile-Christians the decrees to observe, for there was nothing in them which a Jew would be likely to disregard. All that would be needed for the Jews in such cities would be to explain the terms on which Gentiles were to be admitted to the Christian communion.

5. *established in the faith*] The verb is peculiar to the Acts, and is used (iii. 7, 16) of the strengthening of the limbs of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. So its employment here indicates that thus the church was now prepared to make great progress. The barrier to Gentile admission was removed, and so the number of Christians multiplied daily.

6. *Now when they had gone throughout*] The oldest MSS. merely say and they went through.

Phrygia and the region of Galatia] Scarcely the direction, so far as population was concerned, which would have been chosen by them of their own accord, but the inner admonition of the Holy Ghost kept them from entering Proconsular Asia. The news of the events at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost were known to some in Phrygia already (ii. 10), but of Galatia the history has yet made no mention, though we know from St Paul's Epistle to that church that he afterwards had the warmest

7 preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they
assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.
8 And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a
9 vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man
of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into
10 Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the
vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia,

interest in and greatest anxiety concerning the Christians there, among whom Judaizers wrought like mischief with that done in Antioch. From some expressions of St Paul (Gal. iv. 19) it seems likely that it was from his own preaching at this time that churches in Galatia were founded.

and were forbidden] Better, *having been forbidden*. As they had been forbidden the one route, they went by the other. Probably St Luke says little about the events in this part of the journey, for his language below (*v.* 10) seems to shew that he only joined St Paul at Troas.

in Asia] See note on ii. 9.

7. *were come to Mysia*] The Greek scarcely says this. The preposition would be better rendered over against. The course of the journey seems to have been through Galatia and Phrygia, until they got so far to the west as to be opposite to, and on the borders of, Mysia. From this point they were inclined to go north into Bithynia, rather than further to the west, but were again hindered of their intention.

they assayed] i. e. 'made the attempt,' 'tried.' Cp. Coverdale's *Works* (Parker Soc.), p. 113: "As long as the physician hath any hope of the recovery of his patient, he *assayeth* all manner of means and medicines with him."

but the Spirit suffered them not] The oldest authorities read "*the* Spirit of Jesus *suffered them not*." In like manner (Rom. viii. 9) the "Spirit of God" is called also the "Spirit of Christ." Cp. also Gal. iv. 6; Phil. i. 19; 1 Pet. i. 11.

8. *And they passing by Mysia*] i. e. without preaching in that district, which was a part of Proconsular Asia, where they were not permitted to preach.

came down to Troas] The well-known seaport on the coast of Mysia.

9 *a vision appeared*] So also to Ananias (ix. 10). Cp. also x. 3, 17. 19, xi. 5, xii. 9, xviii. 9. This was a part of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel about which St Peter spake on the day of Pentecost (ii. 17)

a man of Macedonia] The words which he spake made clear his nationality.

10. *we endeavoured*] More literally and batter, *we sought*. (So *R. V.*) The steps taken would be in the way of enquiry how and when they could get across the sea to Europe. Here the writer begins to speak in the first person as if at this point he became a sharer in St Paul's labours. This he continues till *v.* 17.

assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from 11
Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and
the next *day* to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, 12
which is the chief city of *that* part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

13—34. *Preaching on the Sabbath at Philippi. Conversion and baptism of Lydia. A spirit of divination cast out by Paul. Anger of those who made gain thereby. Paul and*

to go into Macedonia] The word is stronger than the ordinary verb "to go" and = go forth, an expression very suitable to the first missionary journey from Asia into Europe. This is also as *R. V.*

assuredly gathering] The verb has the sense of "coming to a conclusion from putting things side by side." So it is rendered "proving" in ix. 22 and elsewhere. Here it means "deeming it to be proved."

11. *Samothracia*] This island lies in the north of the Aegean Sea, opposite to that part of the Thracian coast at which the river Hebrus empties itself.

Neapolis] The port of Philippi. This place is generally identified with the modern *Kavalla*. On the discussion about its identity, see *Dictionary of the Bible* (s. v.)

12. *and from thence to Philippi*] As the same verb is used for the whole description of the journey, it seems that the whole was made by ship.

which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony] Better and more in accord with the oldest MSS. "*which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district, a colony.*" (So *R. V.*) Philippi and the country round had long been famous by reason of the neighbouring gold mines. At the time of St Paul's visit it was held by the Romans, and a colony had been founded there by Augustus. The civil magistrates and the military authorities were Roman. Hence the fear when they heard that prisoners whom they had scourged were Roman citizens. For a history of Philippi, see *Dict. of the Bible.*

It should be borne in mind that a Roman colony was not like what we now call a colony. The inhabitants did not settle as they pleased, but were sent out by authority from Rome, marching to their destination like an army with banners, and they reproduced, where they settled, a close resemblance of Roman rule and life. They were planted on the frontiers of the empire for protection, and as a check upon the provincial magistrates. The names of those who went were still enrolled in the lists of the tribes of Rome. Latin was their language, and they used the Roman coinage, and had their chief magistrates sent out or appointed from the mother city. Thus were they very closely united with Rome, and entirely free from any intrusion on the part of the governors of the provinces.

Silas are seized, brought before the authorities, scourged and imprisoned, but the prison doors are opened by a miracle. Conversion and baptism of the jailor and his household.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and
14 spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us:* whose heart

13—34. PREACHING ON THE SABBATH AT PHILIPPI. CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF LYDIA. A SPIRIT OF DIVINATION CAST OUT BY PAUL. ANGER OF THOSE WHO MADE GAIN THEREBY. PAUL AND SILAS ARE SEIZED, BROUGHT BEFORE THE AUTHORITIES, SCOURGED AND IMPRISONED, BUT THE PRISON DOORS ARE OPENED BY A MIRACLE. CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF THE JAILOR AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

13. *where prayer was wont to be made*] *Proseuche* here and in *v.* 16 is the *place of prayer*, and, adopting the reading now most accepted, the English would be "*where we supposed there was a place of prayer.*" (So *R. V.*) The Jews had such *proseuchai* sometimes in buildings, sometimes in the open air, as was the case in this instance. The word is found in this sense in Josephus, *De vita sua*, 54. They are described by Philo (ed. Mang.) II. 282. They were very numerous in Rome (see Mayor, *Juvenal*, III. 296). Because of Jewish ceremonial washings they were, when in the open air, as often as might be, near a river-side or on the sea-shore. Cp. Ezra viii. 15, and 21. And no doubt the language of Ps. cxxxvii. 1, "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down" applies to a similar state of things.

we sat down] The attitude adopted by Jewish teachers.

unto the women which resorted thither] Better (as *R. V.*), "*which were come together.*" The Greek refers to those gathered together on this particular occasion only. Considering the little regard which the Jews had for women as persons to be conversed with and taught, it is noteworthy how large a part women play both in the Gospel History and in the Acts. It was one effect of Christianity to place woman in her true position.

14. *named Lydia*] This may have been her proper name, or it may only have been that by which she passed among the colonists of Philippi, being from the *Lydian* town of Thyatira. From inscriptions which have been found on the site of the ancient town, it is clear that dyeing was one of the staple trades of Thyatira, and it was from thence that Lydia brought over the purple which she sold in Philippi.

Thyatira] On the river Lycus in Lydia. To be distinguished from the river of the same name in Phrygia on which were situated Laodicæa, Hierapolis and Colossæ, in all which places the congregations afterwards became objects of St Paul's great affection and interest. Col. iv. 13.

the Lord opened, that *she* attended unto the *things* which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her 15
household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us. And it came to pass, 16
as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters

which worshipped God] i.e. had become a proselyte of the Jewish faith.

whose heart the Lord opened] St Luke recognizes that without this the word would have made no entrance. He probably makes special mention of this here because he had previously stated that the Lord had called them to preach at Philippi. Having pointed out their work, He helps them to perform it.

that she attended] She gave such heed as to be convinced of their truth. The same verb occurs viii. 6, and from the context both there and here we see that it implies "gave credence unto."

15. *and her household*] Of a like baptizing of a household see below (*v.* 33), and also cp. xi. 14. We are not justified in concluding from these passages that infants were baptized. "Household" might mean slaves and freedwomen.

and abide there] Like the two disciples who followed Jesus (John i. 38) Lydia was anxious to have the teachers, whose lessons she found so suited to the needs of her opened heart, near unto her.

she constrained us] Used only by St Luke in N. T. here and Luke xxiv. 29 of the two disciples at Emmaus. The force used was that of a prayer which would hear no "Nay."

16. *as we went to prayer*] Better, **as we were going to the place of prayer**, see on *v.* 13. For though the Greek noun here is without the article it is clearly to be rendered as in the previous verse. This must have been on another occasion than that on which Lydia was converted. For in the expression "she constrained us" it seems implied that they had already taken up their abode there before the events recorded in this verse.

possessed with a spirit of divination] More literally, and according to the oldest MSS. which make the two nouns in apposition, **having a spirit, a Python.** According to Plutarch (*De def. Orac.* 9) those persons who practised ventriloquism, called also ἐγγαστρίμυθοι, were named *Pythons*. But the damsel in this history clearly laid claim to some prophetic power, and was used as a means of foreknowing the future. So that word Python is here better referred to the name of Apollo, the heathen god of prophecy, and the A.V. "*spirit of divination*" gives the correct idea.

her masters] Some persons, who having found a strange power in the maiden, made use of it, as has oft been done, for their own purposes of gain, and persuaded the people to resort unto her with their questions.

17 much gain by soothsaying: the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.
18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the
19 same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and

by soothsaying] The word is only found here in the N.T., and wherever it occurs in the LXX. it is always used of the words of lying prophets (Deut. xviii. 10; 1 Sam. xxviii. 8; Ezek. xiii. 6, 23; Mic. iii. 11); so that here we are constrained to take it in the same sense "by pretending to foretell the future."

17. *followed Paul and us, and cried*] Whatever the nature of the mental and spiritual malady under which this damsel suffered, it produced on her the like effect which is recorded of evil spirits in the history of Jesus (Mark i. 25; Luke iv. 41), and forced her to confess to the true character of the Christian teachers. The devils believe and tremble (James ii. 19).

After this verse the writer ceases for a time to indicate by his language that he was with St Paul, but in xx. 5, where the Apostle comes once again to Philippi, the first person plural appears in the narrative. It seems therefore not improbable that St Luke was left behind to labour for the spread of the Gospel in Macedonia and only taken away again by St Paul after the work had been well established.

most high God] Cf. the words of the demoniac, Mark v. 7.

shew unto us] The older reading is "*unto* you."

18. *this did she many days*] Whether this following took place only on the sabbaths, when the Apostles were going to the place of prayer, in which case the Apostles must have remained in Philippi some weeks, or whether it was on every occasion on which they appeared in public, we are not told.

Paul, being grieved] The Greek verb is somewhat stronger, and signifies "to be thoroughly worn out with annoyance." It is used (iv. 2), and nowhere else but here besides in N. T., of the annoyance of the priests and Sadducees at the teaching of the Apostles.

said to the spirit] As Christ had acted when on earth, so Paul now will not allow the cry of the evil spirit, even though the words proclaim that he and his companions are servants of the Most High God. So in Christ's name he bids the evil power come forth.

19. *that the hope of their gains was gone*] The verb is exactly the same as in the last clause of the previous verse. When the evil spirit *came out*, there *came out* also the chance of more gain. What the damsel herself may have thought of her own power we cannot tell, but probably, for their end of money-making, the masters had persuaded her that her ravings were prophetic.

drew *them* into the market-place unto the rulers, and 20
brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being
Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs, 21
which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe,
being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against 22
them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and com-
manded to beat *them*. And when they had laid many 23
stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the
jailor to keep them safely: who, having received such a 24

they caught Paul and Silas] As being the two most prominent members of the mission party.

into the market-place] The great place of concourse, and where, as in the Roman *forum*, would be the seat of the authorities.

unto the rulers] The Greek word is the general one for *rulers*, and signifies "the authorities," the special members thereof being indicated by the next verse.

20. *and brought them to the magistrates*] These *strategoi* were the *duumviri*, the two *praetors* specially appointed to preside over the administration of justice, in cases where there was no appeal to Rome, in the *municipia* and *colonies* of the Romans. The title in the Greek seems to indicate somewhat of a military authority, which could administer summary punishment.

being Jews] On the ways in which Roman aversion was aroused and exhibited towards the Jews, for their religious exclusiveness, see Mayor, *Juvenal*, XIV. 96—106 notes, with the authorities there given.

do exceedingly trouble] Only found here in the N. T. The kind of trouble is indicated xvii. 6, "These that have turned the world upside down" is their description.

21. *and teach customs*] Better, *set forth* (So *R. V.*), *make proclamation of;* the word refers to the preaching of the Apostles.

22. *the multitude rose up together*] i. e. together with the aggrieved proprietors of the damsel.

the magistrates rent off their clothes] i. e. the clothes of Paul and Silas, as is clear from the Greek verb, but not so evident from the A. V. Better, "*rent their clothes off them.*" (So *R. V.* only changing *clothes* into *garments.*)

and commanded to beat them] The Greek signifies "to beat them with rods," which was the office of the Roman lictor, who carried rods for the purpose when attending on the magistrates. The use of this special word is an indication that St Luke was aware of the particular kind of beating, and perhaps beheld the infliction. This is one of the occasions, no doubt, to which St Paul alludes (2 Cor. xi. 25), "Thrice was I beaten with rods."

23. *cast them into prison*] So that they should have no chance of teaching any longer. They appear (see *v.* 35) to have intended to keep them one night in prison and then to turn them out of the city.

charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises
26 unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors
27 were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew out his sword, and

24. *the inner prison*] Necessarily a place dark and without ventilation, and hence foul and loathsome; perhaps underground, like the Tullianum at Rome (Varr. *L. L.* v. § 161; Lev. xxix. 22).

their feet fast in the stocks] The stocks (lit. *wood*) was a means of additional security and additional torture. The feet passed through holes and held secure made rest almost impossible. The instrument was of early use (cp. Job xiii. 27, xxxiii. 11), and the Greeks, as well as ourselves, had also the pillory, and had it made with five apertures for head, hands and feet (Aristoph. *Eq.* 1049).

25. *And at midnight*] Sleep being out of the question, they passed the night in devotions. The imperfect tenses of the verbs in this verse imply that the prayers and singing were continued. But it is unnecessary to render (as *R. V.*) "Paul and Silas *were* praying...and the prisoners *were* listening, &c."

unto God] Whose bondservants the damsel had called them (*v.* 17). Now they are in bonds for His name, and He gives them His comfort and refreshing in a manner strange to those who are not His servants.

and the prisoners heard them] The inner prison appears to have held more than Paul and Silas, or it may be that bars in the inner walls allowed the sound to pass into other cells. The verb is not the common one for "hearing," and is rarely found anywhere. It indicates attentive hearkening.

26. *And suddenly there was a great earthquake*] Just as the place wherein the Apostles prayed (iv. 31) was shaken, so here God testifies that He is near at hand.

and every one's bands were loosed] The sense in which these words are to be taken may be gathered from the rest of the description. The chains (δεσμὰ) were made fast to the wall, and the shock which burst asunder the bolts of the doors also released the fastenings which held the chains in the masonry.

27. *And the keeper of the prison*] The word is rendered *jailor* in 23, and might well be so here (as *R. V.*), otherwise the English reader supposes the Greek to be varied from this variation of translation.

awaking out of his sleep] The word is only found here in N.T., and has the sense of a *startled rousing*.

drew out his sword] We now say rather "drew his sword." He

would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, 28
Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called 29
for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and 30
said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, 31
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,

probably slept in such a place that on rising he could observe at a glance whether the prison doors were secure, and had his weapon close at hand so that he might seize and use it on any emergency. He must also have been so near to the open doors before he manifested any design of suicide that the prisoners within could see what he was doing. St Paul out of the dark could observe him before the jailor could see farther than the opened doors.

would have killed himself] He knew what his fate would be. See xii. 19; and compare xxvii. 42, for the way in which Roman officials must answer with their lives for the escape of prisoners. Suicide under such circumstances would to the jailor's mind present the easiest way out of his difficulties, and the teaching of even the greatest minds both of Greece and Rome was that it was justifiable and under some circumstances praiseworthy. The suicide of Cato (*Catonis nobile letum*) furnished a constant text for such teaching. (Cp. Cic. *Tusc.* I. §§ 9—119, Plat. *Apol.* 40.)

28. *But Paul cried*] The sound of one voice would arrest the action, for at the sight of the open doors he had concluded that all had made use of the opportunity and had escaped.

29. *Then he called for a light*] The Greek has "*lights.*" He would summon all the help he could, and wish to make his inspection as speedy as possible.

and came trembling] Lit. *and being terror-stricken.* He connected all that had occurred with the two prisoners Paul and Silas, and as they were not fled away, a change of feeling came over him, and he at once judged them to be more than other men. So his attitude becomes one of supplication and worship.

30. *and brought them out*] There could be no fear that they would flee now who had remained when the open doors made flight easy.

and said, Sirs] The Greek word Κύριοι implies an acknowledgment of great superiority. Those who had been his prisoners are now his "Lords."

what must I do to be saved?] He had probably heard about the testimony of the possessed damsel, that Paul and Silas shewed the way of *salvation*, and now without knowing what it fully meant, he cries out (in his misery, when despair had prompted suicide) asking for the teaching which they had to give.

31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*] The oldest authorities omit *Christ.* The word would not have the same significance for a Gentile

32 and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of
33 the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.
34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before *them*, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

as for a Jew, and may well have been omitted in the address to the jailor. What was asked from Gentile converts was to accept *Jesus* as their *Lord*. The men whom he had just called "Lords" point him to the only "Lord."

and thy house] With the thought that what the head of the family did would be followed by the members. (Cp. verse 15.) They were, we see in the next verse, willing hearers.

32. *the word of the Lord*] Preached to him the doctrine of Christ, as it was then only possible to do it, by the narrative of His life and its purpose.

33. *the same hour of the night*] It was midnight, see verse 25. But a new day, a birthday, had already begun for him and it must be kept as a feast, and he does his utmost to shew his rejoicing by care for those who had caused it.

washed their stripes] An act of attendance that had not been bestowed before. They were thrust into the inner prison, with all their wounds bleeding and uncared for.

34. *he set meat* (Greek, *a table*) *before them*] He would not leave them a moment in the dungeon, but testify to them, how the dawning of faith had filled him with joy.

and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house] The Greek adverb which is represented by the last four words in English would be better combined with the first verb, "and rejoiced with all his house." (So *R. V.*) The concluding verb gives the reason for the joy, and would be more fully rendered "having believed in God" or "having believed God." "To believe on the Lord Jesus" was the exhortation in verse 31. By this later expression we understand what was implied in the first. The belief on Jesus is to believe what God has revealed concerning Him. This had been explained in "the word of the Lord" which they had heard—the word which told how Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies, and by His acts on earth shewed that He was the Son of God.

It is scarcely possible to help being struck in this chapter with the account of the effect of the first preaching of the Gospel in Europe. We see at once its universality and its power. The first notable convert is Lydia, the Asiatic settler, a woman evidently of wealth, position and refinement; then the demoniac slave-girl is made an instrument of proclaiming the presence and power of the Most High God; and last, the Roman jailor, of a class, insensible as a rule and

35—40. *The magistrates would send them away, but Paul refuses to be thus dismissed. He announces that they are Romans, and the magistrates in fear beseech them to depart. They take leave of Lydia and the brethren and leave Philippi.*

And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, 35
saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison 36
told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to
let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. But 37
Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncon-

hardened by habit, and also disposed to despise the Jews who were the bearers of the message of the Gospel. The converts of Philippi were types and an earnest of how Christ's cause would make its way.

35—40. THE MAGISTRATES WOULD SEND THEM AWAY, BUT PAUL REFUSES TO BE THUS DISMISSED. HE ANNOUNCES THAT THEY ARE ROMANS, AND THE MAGISTRATES IN FEAR BESEECH THEM TO DEPART. THEY TAKE LEAVE OF LYDIA AND THE BRETHREN AND LEAVE PHILIPPI.

35. *the serjeants*] These are the lictors, who were the attendants upon the prætors (duumviri), and who probably had on the previous day scourged Paul and Silas. Their Greek name *rabdouchoi* signifies "rod-bearers."

36. *the keeper of the prison*] As before, in *v.* 27, *the jailor.*

told this saying] The Greek text best supported has no pronoun. Better "*reported the words.*" (So *R. V.*) No doubt he came with great joy, and it is evident that Paul and Silas had gone back to their prison after the events at midnight. To make the sentence run smoothly it will be needful to insert the word *saying* before the next sentence, now that the pronoun is removed.

now therefore depart] Better, "come forth," as *R. V.* The verb in the original gives clear indication that they were still in confinement.

37. *But Paul said unto them*] i.e. to the lictors, through the jailor. It is highly probable that the conversation of the Roman officers would be in Latin, and that the proceedings of the previous day may have been conducted in that language. In this way, if Paul and Silas were unfamiliar with the Latin speech, we might account for the non-mention or the disregard of their Roman citizenship. If either the Apostle did not comprehend all that was going on or could not, amid the confusion of such a tumultuous court, make himself understood, the message which he now sends to the magistrates might have had no chance of being heard before the scourging was inflicted.

They have beaten us openly] i.e. publicly. (So *R. V.*) For no doubt they had been lashed to the *palus* or public whipping-post in the sight of the people.

demned, being Romans, and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but
38 let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they
39 feared, when they heard that they were Romans, and they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and
40 desired *them* to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

uncondemned] For all that had been listened to was the charge of the accusers, who, leaving out all mention of the real reason of their charge, viz., that they had lost a source of money-making, put forward the plea that the missionaries were disturbers of public law and order. The crowd shouted with the accusers, and the magistrates, forgetting their position, joined with the mob (verse 22) in the assault on the Apostles.

being Romans] The Greek is more full = *men that are Romans*, (so *R. V.*) and is in marked contrast with the charge of the accusers, which ran, "These men, being Jews." The laws which had been violated by this act were the *Lex Valeria* (B.C. 508) and the *Lex Porcia* (B.C. 300). On the outrage, compare Cicero's language in the Verrine orations (v. 66), 'Facinus est vinciri civem Romanum, *scelus verberari*, prope parricidium necari.'

thrust us out privily] The Apostle would say: let our dismissal from prison be as widely published as was our previous punishment.

38. *and they feared*] Because each Roman citizen had the right of appeal to the Emperor, and the penalty for outraging the rights of such a man was severe.

39. And so finding they had offended in this way, they come in the humblest wise, beseeching that the disciples by departing from Philippi will relieve them of their anxiety.

40. *into the house of Lydia*] Waiting there probably till they were fit to travel farther. But in the midst of the suffering they still exhort and comfort the Christians whom in their stay they had gathered into a church.

How deep the mutual affection which existed between St Paul and these Philippians, his first European converts, is manifest in every line of the Epistle which he wrote to them from Rome in his first imprisonment. They are his greatest joy, they have given him no cause for sorrow, and from first to last have ministered to his afflictions, and made manifest how they prized their "Father in Christ." The jubilant language of the letter is marked by the oft-repeated "Rejoice in the Lord."

1—9. *Paul and Silas journey through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, where some of the Jews raise an uproar against them and Jason their host.*

Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and 17
Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went 2
in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them

XVII. 1—9. PAUL AND SILAS JOURNEY THROUGH AMPHIPOLIS AND APOLLONIA TO THESSALONICA, WHERE SOME OF THE JEWS RAISE AN UPROAR AGAINST THEM AND JASON THEIR HOST.

1. *they had passed through*] The verb occurs in N. T. only here and in Luke viii. 1. The use of the same expressions is a noticeable point in support of the identity of authorship of the two books.

Amphipolis and Apollonia] The journey is made to the south and west. *Amphipolis* was about 33 miles distant from Philippi, along the Egnatian road. It had been a famous place in the time of the Peloponnesian war, and was in St Paul's time a great Roman military station. Its name was given to it because it was as nearly as possible enclosed by the winding stream of the river Strymon. Apollonia was about 30 miles farther on, in the district of Macedonia known as Mygdonia, and was about 37 miles from Thessalonica. The Apostle and his companions appear not to have made any stay in these towns.

Thessalonica] The modern *Saloniki;* to the Christians of which place St Paul afterwards addressed the two earliest of his extant epistles. From very early times Thessalonica had been a famous place. Its old name was Therma, and it was called Thessalonica after a sister of Alexander the Great. It is now one of the most important towns in European Turkey, and it played a great part in the history of the Middle Ages as the bulwark of Christendom in the East. It was captured by the Saracens A.D. 904, then by the Crusaders in 1184, and lastly by the Turks in 1430. Even now there is a large Christian element among its population, and a still larger number of Jews.

a synagogue] The *Text. Rec.* gives the definite article "*the* synagogue," though it is overlooked in the A.V., and we cannot always be sure that we represent the force of the Greek article by the English one. (*R. V.* retains "*a* synagogue"). But there was apparently no synagogue at Philippi, and it may very well be that in Thessalonica dwelt the greatest number of Jews and therefore the facilities for their worship had there alone been advanced so far as to secure them a building for their meetings, which would be known therefore as "*the* synagogue."

2. *as his manner was*] See xiii. 5, 14; xiv. 1, &c.

went in unto them] And was no doubt asked (cf. xiii. 15) to offer any exhortation to the people which he might feel moved to do.

three sabbath days] Of course the Jews would assemble on that day in greater number, and for the other days of the week be less accessible.

3 out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.
4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude,

3. *opening*] St Luke (and he only in the N.T.) xxiv. 32 uses this verb of making plain what before was not understood. We may see from that passage what had been St Paul's work in Thessalonica, "He began at Moses and all the prophets and expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Christ."

and alleging] The more modern use of *allege*, = to assert, has somewhat obscured the older English meaning, which was merely "to set forth." The Greek verb here translated by it signifies primarily "to set out food, &c. on a table," and then figuratively "to set out arguments," but without the idea of assertion. St Paul reasoned but only out of the Scriptures. For the English word, cf. Coverdale, *Works* (Parker Soc.), p. 14, "We will first declare our mind out of Scripture and *allege* (i.e. *set before you*) somewhat more for the better understanding of the matter."

that Christ must needs have suffered] Better, "*that it behoved* the *Christ to suffer*," i.e. the Messiah, whom the Jews expected, but whom they looked for in New Testament days only as a mighty conqueror who should deliver them from their oppressors. Their wishes had been father to their thoughts, and they overlooked all that spake of the Messiah as the "Man of sorrows." This portion of the Scriptures it was which St Paul opened.

and risen again from the dead] Better, "and to rise again from the dead." For they like the disciples themselves in earlier days (John xx. 9) "understood not the scriptures (such as Ps. xvi. 10) that he must rise again from the dead."

and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ] The force of the words will be improved if "said he" be inserted to introduce the direct address. Read (as *R. V.*) "*this Jesus, whom* (said he) *I* proclaim *unto you is* the *Christ.*" For He has both suffered and risen again in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures, and we are witnesses of His resurrection and ascension into heaven.

4. *And some of them believed* (were persuaded)] For St Paul's teaching was by arguments of which they all were able to form an estimate.

and consorted with] The notion conveyed by the Greek and by the English so far as its derivation is concerned is of "casting in their lot with the disciples," deciding to join their community.

and of the devout Greeks] These were proselytes of the gate, heathens by birth, who had embraced in part the Jewish faith. (Cp. xiii. 43, 50, and below, verse 17.)

a great multitude] For these had not the prejudices which clung so close about the born Jews.

and of the chief women not a few. But the Jews which 5
believed not, moved with envy, took unto *them* certain
lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company,
and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of
Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And 6
when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain
brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that

5. *But the Jews which believed not*] In the oldest MSS. the last three words are unrepresented in the Greek. These are very likely a gloss which has crept into the later texts, the reader who made it on his margin wishing to note that not all the Jews were adverse to the Apostle.

moved with envy (**jealousy**)] They did not like to see numbers of men and women drawn away from their party.

certain lewd fellows of the baser sort] The Greek is more nearly represented in modern English by "vile fellows of the rabble." ἀγοραῖος, "of the rabble," is properly the man who having no calling lounges about the ἀγορά, the market-place, in the hope of picking up a chance living, and who is ready for anything bad or good that may present itself. We have no English word sufficiently dignified to use for such a term in translation. "Loafer" comes nearest, but of course is too colloquial. The word "lewd" meant in old English "people," but afterwards came to signify (1) "the common people" and (2) "the ignorant and rude among the people," which is the sense intended by the A. V. The word nearest akin to "lewd" is the Germ. *leute*= people.

set all the city on an uproar] There is no word in the Greek for "all." The Jews in Thessalonica must have been numerous and influential to bring about such a tumult, but they preferred to raise (see *v.* 7) the cry that the new teachers were enemies of the Roman power. This would gain them a larger following.

the house of Jason] Manifestly the host of Paul and Silas. Beyond what is said of him in the following verses (6—9) we know nothing. The name is found, Rom. xvi. 21, in a list of those whom St Paul speaks of as his "kinsmen," but this may be quite a different person. He is most likely to have been a Jew, whose proper name perhaps was Joseph, and Jason, which is Greek, may be only that which he used in his intercourse with Gentiles.

bring them out to the people] So that the excited mob might inflict summary vengeance on them.

6. *they drew Jason*] The word is expressive of considerable violence. Better, "**dragged**." It is used of Saul (viii. 3) "haling" men and women, and committing them to prison.

certain brethren] We see therefore that in these three weeks a congregation or church had been formed.

the rulers of the city] The title πολιτάρχης is found nowhere in literature but in this chapter. But an inscription connected with this

have turned the world upside down are come hither also;
7 whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the
decrees of Cesar, saying that there is another king, *one*
8 Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of
9 the city, when they heard these *things*. And when they
had taken security of Jason, and *of* the other, they let them
go.

10—15. *Paul and Silas sent away to Berea. Noble character of the Bereans. The Jews from Thessalonica follow after Paul, and by reason of their enmity he is conducted to Athens.*

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas

very city of Thessalonica has been preserved on an arch which spans a street of the modern city. It contains some names which occur as the names of St Paul's converts, Sosipater, Gaius, Secundus, but the inscription is probably not earlier than the time of Vespasian (see Boeckh, *Inscr.* 2, p. 52, n. 1967). There the title of the magistrates is given in this precise form; a striking confirmation of the truthfulness of the account before us.

the world] Lit. "the inhabited earth." A phrase used in later Greek to signify the whole Roman Empire, which then embraced a very large portion of the known world (cp. Luke ii. 1). It speaks much for the spread of Christianity and its powerful influence, that words like these should come from the lips of enemies.

7. *hath received*] As guests into his house, and therefore he may be counted a sympathizer with their teaching.

these all] Implying that Paul and Silas, whom they had not found, would also be included in their accusation, if they could be caught.

another king, one Jesus] So far as this chapter gives an account of St Paul's preaching, he had drawn the attention of the Jews to the sufferings of the Messiah, but we cannot doubt that he had also spoken of His kingdom. Such language the mob would be urged to seize on, and make it the justification for their uproar. For Thessalonica though a free city was subject to the Emperor.

8. *And they troubled the people*] i.e. spread alarm among them at the prospect of insurrection, and made them eager to punish the Apostles.

9. *And when they had taken security of Jason*] i.e. having made him responsible either by his finding securities to be bound with and for him, or by making him give some deposit as a pledge for his good conduct, they took measures for securing, so far as those at present in custody were concerned, that they should commit no treason.

and of the other] *Other* is often found in old English as a plural. Cp. Bp Pilkington's *Works* (Parker Soc.), p. 7: "Phinees...punished that wickedness which *other* winked at."

by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than 11
those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those *things* were so. Therefore many of 12
them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of 13
Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the 14

10—15. PAUL AND SILAS SENT AWAY TO BEREA. NOBLE CHARACTER OF THE BEREANS. THE JEWS FROM THESSALONICA FOLLOW AFTER PAUL, AND BY REASON OF THEIR ENMITY HE IS CONDUCTED TO ATHENS.

10. *sent away Paul and Silas*] The after-conduct of the Thessalonian Jews shews that they were resolved to bring the missionaries into danger, therefore their friends sent them secretly away.

Berea] Still the journey is south-west. The old name of Berœa may be recognized in the modern *Verria*.

synagogue of the Jews] See above, *v.* 2.

11. *more noble*] Applied first to nobility of birth (which is the primary sense of *nobilis*), the word in its secondary sense implies, as here, nobility of character.

received the word] i.e. the word of God. It was the same teaching which had been given to the Jews in Thessalonica. This we see because the Berœans go to the O. T. Scriptures to examine into the truth of what they hear. Here we have a noteworthy instance of the right of private judgment. Even an Apostle's word is not to be taken for granted. The noble Berœans were ready to listen, and then diligent to examine into the grounds of what was said.

and searched the scriptures] The word is not the same as in the well-known passage John v. 39. The present verb has more the sense of *examining* and sifting evidence. It was used in Attic law of the steps taken by the lawyers to see whether an action would lie.

12. *also of honourable women*] The same word is found xiii. 50, of the women of Antioch in Pisidia, and signifies that they were of honourable estate, distinguished for their position, influence and wealth.

which were Greeks] The adjective refers specially to the women, but it probably is intended to define the men too. The Jewish converts had been mentioned as examiners of the Scriptures. The men and women mentioned afterwards were probably all Gentiles.

13. *the word of God*] The Thessalonian Jews would not have termed it so, to such an extent had prejudice and long training in the later Jewish teaching blinded their eyes. When Moses was read there was a vail over their hearts, and they saw not the glory.

and stirred up the people] In the oldest texts there are two verbs

brethren sent away Paul to go as *it were* to the sea:
15 but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. And they
that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and re-
ceiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for
to come to him with all speed, they departed.

here, "*stirring up and troubling the multitudes.*" The first contains the figure of a storm at sea, where all is disturbed down to the very depths, a figure apt enough for the confusion which these men desired to create; the second verb is the same that occurs in *v.* 8, and it is probable from this that the way in which the trouble was produced here was the same as there, by the statement that the Apostles were traitors to the Roman power. (For the figurative language cp. Isaiah lvii. 20.)

14. *immediately*] As from Thessalonica so from Berœa, the departure is made in all haste, so much has the charge of conspiring against Cæsar's power disturbed the whole people.

to go as it were to the sea] This rendering of the *Text. Rec.* conveys the idea that for a while the travellers made as though they would go in the direction of the sea, and then to baffle pursuit turned and took the land road to Athens. But the reading of ἕως for ὡς, which has the support of the most ancient authorities, makes the sense to be "to go as far as to the sea," and this is to be preferred for several reasons. For it is difficult to understand that St Paul would have gone on through Thessaly and all the intervening districts which lie north of Attica, and never have sought an opportunity of preaching the word anywhere till Athens was reached. But if he were conveyed to the sea and took ship and was thus brought to Athens, then it is easy to understand that the next place mentioned in the journey is Athens. It is clear too from the whole account of St Paul's travels, that he was a person who by reason of his infirmities could not easily travel alone. That such a person should have been brought so long a distance by land, where the sea-voyage was so accessible and easy, is hardly to be imagined. It may well be that at the departure from Berœa the design was to wait at the coast till his proper companions could come to him, but that when the sea was reached there was found a speedy opportunity of sailing into Attica, which the Apostle embraced, as his conductors were willing to go all the journey with him.

abode there still] Because Silas and Timothy had played a less prominent part and were not in the same peril as St Paul.

15. *they that conducted Paul*] The use of the Greek verb (which is only found here in N. T. in this sense) gives the idea that the whole care and ordering of the journey was in their hands rather than the Apostle's.

brought him unto Athens] And of course saw him safely settled where he could wait for his fellow-missionaries, which he seems to have designed to do, without preaching, had not his spirit been roused by the sights he saw.

with all speed] As at present he was alone, and not able to set about his work so promptly.

16—21. *Paul, provoked by the prevalence of idolatry at Athens, first addresses the Jews and then the Gentiles. Some of the philosophers question him on his teaching, and bring him to the Areopagus that they may hear him more at full.*

Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was 16
stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to
idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with 17
the Jews, and with the devout *persons*, and in the market
daily with them that met with *him*. Then certain philo- 18
sophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered

16—21. PAUL, PROVOKED BY THE PREVALENCE OF IDOLATRY AT ATHENS, FIRST ADDRESSES THE JEWS AND THEN THE GENTILES. SOME OF THE PHILOSOPHERS QUESTION HIM ON HIS TEACHING, AND BRING HIM TO THE AREOPAGUS THAT THEY MAY HEAR HIM MORE AT FULL.

16. *his spirit was stirred in him*] But the stirring was of the sharpest. The verb is akin to the noun which in xv. 39 is used of the paroxysm of contention between Paul and Barnabas. His spirit was *provoked* within him, till he could not forbear to speak, could not wait till Timothy and Silas arrived.

when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry] Better (with *R. V.*) "as he beheld the city full of idols." This, the marginal rendering of the A. V., appears, from the analogy of similar words, to be the closer meaning, and it agrees somewhat better with the facts. What St Paul beheld was the numerous statues erected some to one god, some to another. That the city was wholly given to idolatry was the inference from this abundance of idols. The mutilation of the busts of Hermes before the Sicilian expedition in the Peloponnesian war shews how numerous were the statues erected to one divinity only. Time had added many to the number before St Paul's visit.

17. *Therefore disputed* (reasoned) *he in the synagogue*] Going first to the Jews, and naturally expecting sympathy from them in his excitement against idolatry.

the devout persons] As before, the proselytes of the gate. Cp. xiii. 50, and above *v.* 4.

and in the market daily] One cannot but be reminded of the way in which Socrates some centuries earlier had thus gone about in the same city seizing eagerly on every one who would listen, and trying, according to his light, to shew them higher things, to open their eyes that they might discern between real knowledge and conceit without knowledge.

18. *philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoicks*] In St Paul's day these two systems of philosophy were most prominent throughout the Roman world, and were regarded as conflicting though in many points they bear a strong likeness to one another. Both were the

result of a desire to find some better principle for the guidance of man's moral nature than could be found in the so-called religious systems of Greece and Rome. But before the Christian era much that was best in both schools had sadly degenerated from its pristine character.

The founder of the Stoics was Zeno of Citium in Cyprus. His precise date is uncertain, but he flourished in the century between B.C. 350—250. The first lesson of his teaching was that the highest duty of the philosopher was to practise virtue. For the doing this knowledge was necessary, and the only knowledge that could be relied on was that which was based upon sensation. Reality belonged only to material things such as the senses could appreciate. In this manner the Stoic philosophy became materialist. For though owning the existence of God and of the soul in man, Zeno and his followers spake of these as, in some sense, material. But they termed God the soul of the universe, and taught that all things are produced from him, and will at last be absorbed into him again. And then a new world-cycle will begin and be in all respects like that which went before. So the Stoics were Pantheists. They taught moreover that the universe was governed by unchanging law, that the lot of individuals, and the occurrence of particular events were all uncertain. The care of Providence was for the fabric of the universe, and only indirectly extended to particulars or individuals whose lot was bound up with the unchanging course of fixed law. The Stoics therefore were fatalists. The way in which the individual could make the nearest approach to happiness was by bringing himself, through knowledge, into harmony with the course of the universe. But so unimportant did the individual appear to these philosophers, that suicide was held to be lawful, and at times praiseworthy. They were conscious of both physical and moral evil in the world, and from this men might escape by self-inflicted death. They taught however that, though the virtuous might have to suffer, no real evil happens to them, nor real good to the vicious. Fortified with this thought, the Stoic trained himself to be proudly independent of externals, and to bear evils, should they come, with indifference, and thus he strove to secure undisturbed peace of mind. Materialism, Pantheism, Fatalism and pride, were the features of one of the systems into contact with which St Paul was brought at Athens.

The Epicureans (named from Epicurus, born at Samos B.C. 342) agreed with the Stoics that philosophy should seek to promote the happiness of man, but maintained that this end could be best gained by the pursuit of pleasure. By this language they did not intend profligate pleasure, but a state wherein the body was free from pain and the mind from disturbance. They too made the senses their means of judging of what is pleasure, and so with them man became the measure of all good for himself. Thus the Epicureans were materialists. But differing from the Stoics they taught the world was formed by chance, and that the gods had no concern in its creation. Their gods were described as perfectly happy, dwelling apart and caring neither for the world nor its inhabitants. Thus the Epicureans were practical atheists. With them man might approach to a state of happiness by circumscribing his wants, so that life might be free from care. To restrain

him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other *some,* He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, 19

the senses was the Epicurean road to happiness, to crush them as much as possible into insensibility was the path of the Stoic. But having such thoughts of the gods, neither system had in any way run counter to the popular theology. By doing so the Stoic would fear lest he should be thought to deny God altogether, while the Epicurean, though thinking all such worship folly, yet felt it too great an interruption to the pleasure which he sought to become an advocate of the abolition of idol worship. So St Paul found Athens crowded with the images and altars of the gods.

What will this babbler say] Better, *What* would, &c. The A.V. conceals the fact that *will* here signifies "meaneth" or "wisheth" to say, "What would he go on to say if we would listen?"

The word rendered "babbler" is not found elsewhere in N.T. In profane writers it is used of birds picking up scattered grain, and then figuratively of men who pick up a living as best they may, and hence are willing to flatter for the sake of what they can get, and so are men without principle or ground in what they say.

a setter forth of strange gods] The word δαιμόνια here rendered "gods" is the word from which the English "demon" is derived. It was used in classical Greek mostly to denote some inferior order of divine beings. It was one of the accusations brought against Socrates and the charge on which he was condemned that he introduced new *daimonia* (Xen. *Mem.* I. 1, 2; Plato, *Apol.* 40 A &c.). It has been thought by some that the Athenians, by using the plural word, understood that "Jesus" was one new divinity and "Anastasis" (the Resurrection) another. But it is not necessary to suppose this. They might very well speak of a preacher of Jesus as a setter forth of new *divinities.* For they evidently saw that he had more to say than they had yet heard.

Times seem changed at Athens since the prosecution of Socrates, for it is not anger, but scornful curiosity which prompts the language of the speakers. They do not mean to assail Paul for his teaching, and amid the abundance of idols, they perhaps now would have felt no difficulty in allowing Jesus a place, provided he did not seek to overthrow all the rest of their divinities.

The nature of St Paul's teaching "in the market-place" has not been mentioned until we are told that it was of "Jesus and the resurrection." We may take this as a specimen of the way in which the author of the Acts has dealt with his materials. He has not seen it needful here to do more than specify in half-a-dozen words what St Paul had spoken about; and so when we have a report of a speech we need not suppose that he has given, or intended to give, more than a summary of what the speaker said, and, adhering to the subtance, has cast his abbreviated record into such form as best fitted his narrative.

19. *And they took him*] Better, *took* hold of *him.* (As *R. V.*) But

saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou
20 speakest, *is*? For thou bringest certain strange *things* to
our ears: we would know therefore what these *things* mean.

there is no need to suppose that any violence was used or intended. The same verb is used often of taking by the hand to aid or protect (so Mark viii. 23; Acts xxiii. 19), and is the word by which the action of Barnabas is described (Acts ix. 27) when "he *took* Paul and brought him to the apostles." Moreover the whole context shews that the action of the crowd was in no sense that of an arrest, for we read (*v.* 33) when his speech was done "Paul departed from among them," evidently having been under no kind of restraint.

and brought him unto Areopagus] More clearly expressed if we read "the *Areopagus*." This place, the name of which is translated "Mars' hill" below in the text and here in the margin of the A.V., was an eminence to the west of the Acropolis at Athens. It was famous in classic literature as the meeting-place of the Athenian council of Areopagus which took its name from the place where it met. To this hill of Mars (Ares) the philosophers led St Paul, probably at a time when it was unoccupied (though some suppose that the court was sitting), that they might the better hear him away from the bustle of the market-place, and that he might more conveniently address a larger audience.

May we know] The verb here rendered "may" = literally "are we able." But there is no doubt that its force is well given by the A.V. For the literal force "to be able" often merged itself in that of "to wish" or "to be willing." Cp. Luke xi. 7, where the verb is translated "I *cannot* (= I am not able to) rise and give thee," but the sense is "*I don't wish* to rise," for after importunity he does arise and do all that is asked. The Stoics and Epicureans were not likely to doubt their own *ability* to understand all that St Paul might say to them.

what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is] Better (with *R. V.*), "*what this new doctrine is* which is spoken by thee." The sense conveyed by the verb (λαλεῖν) is often in N.T. that of *announcing* or *publishing*, and the word is not unfrequently used of messages spoken by God or by his prophets (cp. Luke i. 45, 55, 70, xxiv. 25; Acts iii. 21, 24; James v. 10). The Apostle was not speaking to the Athenians *about* the doctrine, his words were the doctrine.

20. *strange things*] The original is not an adjective, but a participle, and signifies "something which strikes a person as strange." So that the effect is indicated which had been produced on the minds of the hearers. The words had filled them with surprise. In the middle voice the word is found 1 Pet. iv. 4, 12 = "to think anything strange."

what these things mean] See above on *v.* 18.

21. This verse is a parenthesis explanatory of what has gone before. The audience had been struck with the strange teaching, and that it was strange was enough. Novelty was their life's pursuit. So without having any regard for the importance of the teaching, they were ready to listen because it was new.

(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there 21
spent their time in nothing else, but *either* to tell, or
to hear some new *thing*.)

22—31. *Speech of St Paul at Athens.*

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, 22
Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all *things* ye are too

strangers which were there] The words will bear a fuller rendering, "*strangers* **sojourning** *there*." (So *R. V.*) The place was famous, and all seekers after novelty came there from every quarter.

spent their time] More literally "had leisure for." But the one sense is the complement of the other. If all the time be spent in one way, there is no leisure left for any thing else. But the word has the further sense of "finding a favourable opportunity." The Athenians could find time for the pursuit of novelty, but for nothing beside. The imperfect tense of the verb also implies that this was their *constant* state of mind.

either to tell, or to hear some new thing] This character of the Athenian populace is confirmed by many statements of classical authors. In Thuc. III. 38 Cleon is represented as complaining of his countrymen that they were in the habit of playing the part of "spectators in displays of oratory, and listeners to the stories of what others had done;" and a like charge is made more than once by Demosthenes in his speeches on the vigorous policy of Philip of Macedon, which he contrasts with the Athenian love of talk and news.

22—31. Speech of St Paul at Athens.

Taking notice of the extreme religious scrupulousness, which had led the Athenians to raise an altar to an unknown God, the Apostle declares to them the God whom alone they ought to worship, and whom as yet they did not know. This God was the Maker and Preserver of all things, and the Father of all men, and He desired to bring all to a knowledge of Himself. Athenian poets had spoken of this Fatherhood of God. Such a God is not fitly represented by graven images, and He would have men cease from such ignorant worship, for he will be the Judge as well as Father of men, and has given proof of the reality of the judgment and of the world to come by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

22. *in the midst of Mars' hill*] Better, *in the midst of the Areopagus*. See on *v.* 19. There is no need for translating the name in one way there, and in another here.

Ye men of Athens] The language of the Apostle's address takes exactly the form which it would have assumed in the mouth of one of their own orators. This may be due either to St Paul's knowledge of Greek literature, and to his desire, everywhere manifest, to find words acceptable to his audience; or it may be that St Luke giving an abstract of the speech has cast the initial words into a form which

23 superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO *THE* UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly wor-

Demosthenes would have employed. In the latter case it is no mark of unfaithfulness in the author, who clearly in these ten verses can only mean to give a skeleton of what the Apostle really uttered. St Paul spake at length, we cannot doubt, when he stood in such a place and before such an audience. The historian in the Acts gives the barest outline of what was spoken, and cannot be thought to have meant his words to be otherwise accepted, seeing that what he has given us would hardly occupy five minutes in the utterance.

ye are too superstitious] The Greek adjective which the Apostle here employs has two shades of meaning, "superstitious," as in the A. V., and "religious" in a better sense. At the outset St Paul would not wish to give offence, and so the more complementary sense is to be preferred. As the word is of the comparative degree, this sense may be expressed either by "somewhat superstitious" (as *R. V.*) or "very religious." The first would imply only a small shade of the less acceptable meaning, the latter would be an expression of praise of the Athenians above other people. The former is to be chosen, for St Paul did not wish to give praise, but after some slight blame to point out a more excellent way. For a description of the δεισιδαίμων, which exactly answers to what we call "superstitious," see Theophrastus *Charact.* c. xvii.

23. *For as I passed by* (**along**)] The word refers to the whole of the Apostle's walk about the city.

and beheld your devotions] Better, "**and noticed the objects of your worship.**" (With *R. V.*) The verb is that which in the previous verse is translated "I perceive," only that here it is strengthened by a preposition which gives it the force of "fully observe." The Apostle had not only seen the statues but read the inscriptions. The noun can only mean "a thing that is worshipped" not "the act of worship" as is the sense of the A.V.

I found an altar] The Greek has an emphatic conjunction, which might be represented by "*I found* **also** an altar," i.e. beside other things which I noticed.

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD] The original has no article and would be correctly rendered "*To* an *unknown God.*" But it is not always correct to omit the article in English because it does not appear in the original: here however it does not influence the meaning. When the altar was erected, it was in consequence of some visitation of which the cause was not apparent. and which could be ascribed to none of the existing divinities. We may conceive the Athenians speaking of the power which caused the visitation either as "an unknown God" or as "the unknown God" whose wrath they would deprecate, and, in an inscription, representing all that was intended without the article. We have abundant evidence of the existence in Athens of such altars as that to which St Paul alludes. But the words in which they are described generally run in the plural number, and speak of "the unknown gods."

ship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world 24
and all *things* therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and

Thus Pausanias (I. i. 4) describing one of the ports of Athens tells us that there were there "altars to gods styled *unknown*," and Philostratus in his *Life of Apollonius* says "at Athens there are erected altars for *unknown* gods." There is a like allusion in (pseudo) Lucian's *Philopatris*, but it is doubtful whether that is not drawn from this passage of the Acts. And Jerome writing on Tit. i. 12, says "The inscription on the altar was not, as Paul stated, 'To the unknown God' but 'To the unknown gods of Asia and Europe and Africa, to unknown and foreign Gods.' But, because Paul required to speak of only one unknown God, he used the word in the singular." But it is better to suppose that St Paul saw what he says he saw, and as evidence that such an inscription was not improbable, we may quote the Latin inscription found on an altar at Ostia, now in the Vatican, representing a sacrificial group in connexion with the worship of Mithras, the Sun-god of the later Persian mythology (Orelli, *Inscr. Gel.* ii. 5000), "Signum indeprehensibilis dei" which is a very near approach in Latin to what the Greek inscription to which the Apostle alludes would mean. The word "unknown" must not be pressed too far into the sense of "unknowable," because of what comes after. Paul says that "he is prepared to set forth to them that power which they were worshipping in ignorance." So though man by searching cannot find out God, yet he would desire to teach the Athenians, what he says elsewhere, that "the everlasting power and divinity of God may be clearly seen through the things that are made" (Rom. i. 20).

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship] The best MSS. give the relative in the neuter. The better rendering therefore is **What *therefore ye worship* in ignorance.** (As *R. V.*) The A. V. seems to convey the sense that the worship was of an ignorant character: whereas what the Apostle intends to say is not any reflection on the nature of their worship, but only that they offered it in ignorance, and this he was ready to dispel. He accepts their religious character, takes his stand on their own confession that they are in ignorance about God, and so offers his teaching.

him declare I unto you] Of course in harmony with the previous clause the pronoun is here also neuter. "**This set I forth unto you.**" (As *R. V.*) In the verb which he employs the Apostle takes up their own word (verse 18) when they said "He seemeth to be a *setter forth* of strange gods." It is well that the similarity of word should be retained in the English.

24. *God that made the world*, &c.] Better, **The *God*, &c.**, which is specially needed when the neuter pronouns are read in the previous verse.

This was no Epicurean god, who dwelt apart and in constant repose; nor was the world a thing of chance as those philosophers taught, but God's own handiwork, and all things in it were of His creation.

seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth] And therefore supreme possessor and disposer of all that is therein.

25 earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is
worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any
thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all
26 *things;* and hath made of one blood all nations of men for
to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined
the times before appointed, and the bounds of their
27 habitation, that *they* should seek the Lord, if haply they
might feel after him, and find *him*, though he be not far

dwelleth not in temples made with hands] Of which Athens had some of the most renowned in the world. A special interest attaches to these words as being so like those of Stephen (vii. 48). If true of the temple at Jerusalem, *a fortiori*, it is true of all Christian churches.

25. *neither is worshipped with* (served by) *men's hands*] The verb implies the sort of service yielded by a steward to his master, or a minister to his King, a service in which the superior is not independent of his inferior, and could not well do without him. This is seen in the next clause. God is not like earthly masters and kings. He gives all, and men can only offer to Him themselves in return. Cp. Pss. l., li. for like teaching.

26. *and hath made of one blood*] All the best MSS. omit the word "blood." And this seems to bring out more fully what the Apostle desires to dwell on; the Fatherhood of God. It is not that men are all of one family and so all equal in God's eyes, and ought to be in the eyes of one another. But when we read "they are made of One" we are carried back to the higher thought of the prophet (Malachi ii. 10), "Have we not all one Father?" This was a philosophy not likely to be acceptable to the Athenians among whom the distinction between Greeks and Barbarians was as radical as that which has grown up in America between white man and "nigger," or between Europeans and natives in India.

for to dwell on all the face of the earth] For His children the Father provided a home.

and hath determined the times before appointed] The word προστεταγμένους has more authority than προτεταγμένους and gives a better sense. The times (rather *seasons*) are appointed unto men, but it is not so clear what "before-appointed" could mean. Read "*And hath determined* **their appointed seasons**." (So *R. V.*) The "seasons" referred to are those which God has ordained for seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, day and night, which are fixed by his decree and make the earth a fitting abode for men.

and the bounds of their habitation] i.e. where they can dwell and where they cannot.

27. *that they should seek the Lord*] The best authorities read "*seek* **God**." This was the lesson which God meant His creation and providence to teach, that through His works men should see Him.

if haply they might feel after him, and find him] The world was to be man's book in which he should read God's power and love; thus

from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, 28
and have our being; as certain also of your own poets
have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as 29
we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the
Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven
by art and man's device. And the times of *this* ignorance 30
God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where

stimulated, a desire to know more might grow, and by efforts, which the graphic word of the Apostle compares to the exertion of one groping in the dark, more knowledge would come, and at last the full discovery would be made. God would be found. He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

though he be not far from every one of us] And so can reveal Himself according to the measure of zeal shewn by those who seek Him.

28. *for in him we live*] i.e. *through* or *by* Him. All our existence is through His care, therefore He must be near to all of us. The preposition is rendered *by* in verse 31, "*By* that man whom he hath ordained."

and move] More literally, *are moved.* The word does not refer to the motion of persons from place to place, but to those internal movements of the mind and spirit of which the outward actions are the effect. St Paul means that the feelings of men are acted on by God, who speaks to the heart through all nature if men will but hearken. This is the truth of which Pantheism is the caricature.

your own poets have said] The words are a quotation from Arātus, *Phænomena*, 5, and are also found in Cleanthes' *Hymn to Jupiter*, 5. Arātus was a native of Cilicia, and St Paul may in consequence be supposed to have known of his writings as of those of a fellow-countryman. By quoting from their own literature to the Athenians, St Paul illustrates his own declaration that in his labours "he became all things to all men." Such a quotation was also very well devised for arresting the attention of these cultivated hearers, and winning it may be some consideration for the speaker, as also being a man of culture.

29. *we ought not to think*, &c.] As man is of more honour than material things, how far above these must the Godhead be. The Athenians, the Apostle would teach them, had formed not too high but too low a conception of themselves.

30. *And the times of this ignorance*] There is no pronoun in the original, and the conjunctions are feebly represented by "and." The sense is more nearly conveyed by "Having however overlooked the times of ignorance." (Cp. Rom. iii. 25.) "To wink at" is now used with the meaning of "to connive at." St Paul, however, only means that God has not imputed to men the errors which they committed in ignorance, but now the case is changed. Men cannot plead ignorance, who have heard of Christ. (Cp. Luke xii. 48.)

but now commandeth] If the translation of the first clause be taken as above, the conjunction "but" (which has no Greek representative)

31 to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

32—34. *Effect of St Paul's speech. Some mocked, but others believed.*

32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again

is not needed. The best Greek text would be literally translated "He now commandeth men that they all everywhere should repent" (as nearly *R. V.*). "Repentance" means that they shall amend the lives which hitherto they have lived wrongly through ignorance.

31. *because he hath appointed*, &c.] The day of judgment had long ago been appointed in God's foreknowledge, but through Christ man's resurrection and immortality have been made more clear. He knows now, who knows of Christ, that the Son of Man has been raised up, as the first-fruits of a general resurrection. The rising of Christ proved Him to be divine and stamped His doctrine as true. But a part of that doctrine is (Matth. xxv. 32) "Before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats." By the resurrection of Jesus, God has given to men assurance that what Jesus taught was true, therefore because of the judgment which Christ foretold, men should repent everywhere, for the whole world shall be judged.

It is worth while to notice how St Paul's argument advances through its various stages. He speaks first of God as the Creator of the world and of men, and of the ordinances which He has made for man's abode on earth. Then he argues that all this should inspire men with the thought that as they are more worthy than material things, so God is far exalted above men. This ought to have led them to seek after Him, and even in the darker days those who sought could find Him. But now the days of God's revelation through nature are at an end. He has spoken through that Son of Man whom the resurrection proved to be the Son of God. Through Him will God judge the world, for which judgment men should prepare themselves by repentance.

It may be that at this point the Apostle's speech was stopped. Neither party among the hearers would have any sympathy with the doctrine of a resurrection and a final judgment. Had the address been completed, St Paul would have probably spoken in more definite language of the life and work of Jesus.

32—34. Effect of St Paul's speech. Some mocked, but others believed.

32. *some mocked*] Just as (Acts ii. 13) did some men on the day of Pentecost. To the Epicurean this life was all, and the Stoic's teaching,

of this *matter*. So Paul departed from among them. How- 33
beit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the 34
which *was* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named
Damaris, and others with them.

1—11. *Paul goes from Athens to Corinth, labours there with his own hands for his maintenance. He is encouraged in his preaching by a vision of the Lord.*

XVIII. After these *things* Paul departed from Athens, and came 18

that all should finally be absorbed into the Godhead, forbade the belief that the dead should rise again. So of these men the Epicureans would most likely be the mockers, the Stoics might be expected to give more heed; and theirs perhaps would be the decision to hear the Apostle again. The Greek of the best accepted MSS. makes the last clause run, "*We will hear thee* yet *again concerning this*."

34. *Dionysius the Areopagite*] i.e. one of the members of the upper council of Athens. He must have been a man of position and influence, for no one could be a member of this council unless he had filled some high office of state, and was above 60 years of age. Tradition (Euseb. *H. E.* III. 4; IV. 23) says that this Dionysius was the first bishop of Athens, and that he was martyred. The works which long circulated among Christians as his compositions, and which even at the time of the Reformation occupied much of the thoughts and labours of such men as Dean Colet, are no doubt forgeries of a much later date than the days of this Dionysius.

XVIII. 1—11. PAUL GOES FROM ATHENS TO CORINTH, LABOURS THERE WITH HIS OWN HANDS FOR HIS MAINTENANCE. HE IS ENCOURAGED IN HIS PREACHING BY A VISION OF THE LORD.

1. *After these things Paul departed*] The best authorities omit the name of the Apostle, merely reading "**he** *departed*." So *R. V.*

came to Corinth] As Athens was the seat of culture, so Corinth was the seat of commerce in the south of Greece. The city, at this time the political capital of Greece and the residence of the Roman pro-consul, stood on the isthmus which united the Peloponnesus to the mainland, and through it all land traffic between the peninsula and the rest of Greece must pass, while its two harbours, one on each side of the neck of land on which Corinth stood, made it the resort of seafaring traders both from east and west. Of Lechæum, the western port, on the Corinthian gulf, we have no mention in the New Testament, but Cenchreæ, the harbour on the Saronic gulf, by which communication with the East was kept up, is mentioned in verse 18. The city was also made famous for its connexion with the Isthmian games, from which St Paul in his Epistles draws frequent illustrations when writing to the Corinthian Church. (See 1 Cor. ix. 24—27, &c.) For further particulars of the history of Corinth see *Dict. of Bible*, s. v.

2 to Corinth; and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart
3 from Rome:) and came unto them. And because *he* was of

2. *a certain Jew named Aquila*] The name *Aquila* is a Latin word, and it is not likely that this was the man's Jewish name, but as the custom was among the Jews, he had probably assumed a Roman name during his dwelling in Italy and in his intercourse with the Gentiles. See above on xiii. 9. The name is identified, by the Jews, with that of Onkelos, who wrote a Targum on the Pentateuch, and some make that Onkelos to be the same with Aquila who translated the Old Testament into Greek, of which translation part is preserved to us in Origen's Hexapla.

born in Pontus] Lit. *a man of Pontus by race.* The provinces of Asia Minor abounded with Jewish families of the Dispersion, as we may see from the whole history in the Acts. In Acts ii. 9—10 many of these districts are mentioned as contributing to the number of worshippers who had come to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Pontus came under Roman sway when its king Mithridates was conquered by Pompey, and this connexion may have led Aquila to leave his native country for Italy. Aquila and his wife are mentioned Rom. xvi. 3 as though they were again in Rome, so that probably they had formed ties there which were only temporarily severed by the Claudian edict mentioned in this verse. (It is however questioned whether the salutations in Rom. xvi. form part of the Epistle as it was sent to the Romans.) They were with St Paul when he wrote the first Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 19), and were so far settled in Ephesus, where that Epistle was written, as to have a house which they could place at the service of the Christians there, as a place to worship in. And if (as is most probable) Timothy was in Ephesus when the second Epistle (2 Tim. iv. 19) was addressed to him, they were in that city again at this later date (for Priscilla is only the diminutive form of Prisca as the name of the wife is there written). More than this is not known of their changes of abode.

Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome] The Jews were often objects of persecution in Rome, but this particular occasion is probably that mentioned by Suetonius, *Claud.* 25, where we read that by reason of Jewish tumults at the instigation of one Christus (or Chrestus) they were driven out of the city. Whether this was the name of some Jew then resident in Rome, or whether it is a reference to some disturbance that had arisen from the Jewish expectation of "the Christ" or Messiah, and the name Christus is mistakenly used by Suetonius as though it were that of some agitator actually present, we cannot tell. Or it may have been some movement of the Jews against the Christians because they taught that the "Christ" was already come. In that case the name "Christus" would come into great prominence, and might give rise to the statement of Suetonius that a person of that name had been the instigator of the disturbances.

the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for *by* their occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned 4
in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded *the* Jews and
the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come 5

3. *And because he was of the same craft*] Among the Jews every Rabbi deemed it proper to practise some handicraft, and they have a proverb about R. Isaac, who was a smith, "Better is the sentence of the smith (R. Isaac) than that of the smith's son (R. Jochanan)," thus marking their opinion that the pursuit of a craft was no injury to the teacher's wisdom (T. B. *Sanhedrin*, 96a). Thus our Lord is spoken of (Mark vi. 3) as "the carpenter."

he abode with them, and wrought] Some ancient authorities read *and they wrought*. This change in the number seems awkward. The mention already made of the craft of Aquila and his wife conveys the information that *they* wrought: what the sentence seems to need is the addition which the singular gives that "he wrought." In a passage from T. B. *Sukkah*, 51 b, part of which has already been quoted on vi. 9, we read in a description of the Jewish synagogue at Alexandria, "The people did not sit mixed together, but goldsmiths by themselves, and silversmiths by themselves, and ironworkers by themselves, and miners by themselves, and weavers by themselves, and when a poor man came there he recognised the members of his craft, and went there, and from thence was his support, and that of the members of his house." This may explain how readily Paul found at Corinth some persons who were of his own craft.

by their occupation they were tentmakers] What they made was most probably tent-cloth. This was of goats' hair, and the plaiting of it into strips and joining these together was a common employment in Cilicia, to such an extent that the district gave name to the material and the articles made of it, a soldier's and sailor's rough hair rug being named *Cilicium*. As the trade was intended in such cases as St Paul's merely to be used as a resource under circumstances of need which were not likely to come about, we can understand that while complying with Jewish feeling in the matter, a trade would be chosen for the boy which would not consume a large part of his time in learning. Mishnah *Qiddushin* IV. 14 says "let a person teach his son a trade both clean and easy." The most common handicraft of Tarsus offered just such a trade in the making of this rough goats' hair cloth.

4. *and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks*] There are no articles in the original and they are omitted in the *Revised Version*. No doubt, as in other Gentile cities, the religion of the Jews in Corinth gained the attention of many among the Gentiles, who as proselytes or inclining thereto would form part of the Sabbath audience in the synagogue. According to his rule St Paul addressed himself to the Jews first.

5. *And* (But) *when Silas and Timotheus were come* (came down) *from Macedonia*] The particle at the beginning of the verse is better regarded as adversative. We have in this verse an account of a change

from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to
6 the Jews *that* Jesus *was* Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am*
7 clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man*'s house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house

in the character of the Apostle's preaching after the arrival of Silas and Timothy, who had been left at Berœa (xvii. 14). It may well be that he had encouragement by their presence in his work, and also that it was not so necessary for him to consume his whole time on his craft because the Philippians had sent a contribution for his support (Phil. iv. 15; 2 Cor. xi. 9).

Paul was pressed in spirit] The best texts read, **was constrained by the word** (so *R. V.*), and the Vulg. "instabat verbo" is evidence in its favour. The sense seems to be, he was earnestly occupied in preaching the Word, and felt himself more urged on, and also more able, to preach, because of his freedom from the necessity of constant labour. It was apparently only on the Sabbath that he had reasoned with the people before. The *usus loquendi* favours the passive meaning. Meyer (3rd ed.) renders "he was apprehended, seized by the word" in the sense of internal pressure of spirit.

testifying *to the Jews that Jesus was* **the** *Christ*] This sentence which is of the participial form in the original intimates the manner in which the greater earnestness of the Apostle was exhibited. He gave in all its fulness his solemn testimony, no doubt confirmed from Scripture and by the narrative of his own miraculous conversion, that this Jesus, whom he had formerly persecuted, was the Christ, the Messiah whom the Jews had long expected.

6. *opposed themselves*] The word implies very strong opposition, as of a force drawn up in battle array. It was an organized opposition.

and blasphemed] The same word is used in 2 Pet. ii. 2, "The way of truth shall be evil spoken of." And the same conduct, though the word is different, is described in the next chapter (xix. 9), "speaking evil of the Way before the multitude."

he shook **out** *his raiment*] Figurative of entire renunciation of them. Nothing that pertained to them should cling to him; and in like manner he would cast them off from his thoughts (cp. xiii. 51). For the action cp. Neh. v. 13.

Your blood be upon your own heads] He says "blood" in the sense of "destruction," using figuratively the language which in Josh. ii. 19 is used literally.

I will go unto the Gentiles] i. e. the Gentiles in Corinth. For in future preaching elsewhere (see xix. 8) he addressed the Jews and went to the synagogue, as had been his custom from the first.

7. *a certain man's house, named Justus*] He used this house for the

joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the *chief* 8
ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all
his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed,
and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in 9
the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold

purposes of teaching and worship. We may suppose that for his own lodging, he still remained with Aquila and Priscilla. Some MSS. give the name Titus Justus to this man, and the double name is adopted in the Revised Version, but there is good authority for the received text.

one that worshipped God] He was a Proselyte. The word is used of religious proselytes (xiii. 43) and of devout Greeks (xvii. 4). His house was therefore an appropriate place in which both Jews and Gentiles might meet, and to which Gentiles would be more ready to come than to that of a Jew by birth.

whose house joined hard to the synagogue] It is likely that St Paul, though he came no more to the synagogue at Corinth, chose not to betake himself far away, because he would be ready to receive any of his brethren who might change their feelings and come to him. But we can see how, while his near neighbourhood gave opportunity for this, the meetings of those who came to the synagogue with those who were going to the house of Justus, would be likely to cause bitterness, especially when the number of St Paul's adherents began to increase, and a ruler of the synagogue was counted among them.

8. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue*] It is better to omit "chief" otherwise this part of the word is twice translated. (So *R. V.*) This Crispus is alluded to, 1 Cor. i. 14, as one of the few whom St Paul himself baptized. His previous distinguished position among the Jews, and the conversion of his whole family, would make him noticeable among the Christian converts. There may have been more than one synagogue in Corinth. In verse 17 we read of Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue. But it is quite possible that this man may have been appointed immediately after the conversion of Crispus, and may have been desirous to shew his zeal against the Christian teachers by laying an immediate information against Paul before the proconsul.

and many of the Corinthians...were baptized] St Paul mentions that he himself only baptized (in addition to Crispus) Gaius and the household of Stephanas. But Silas and Timothy were now by his side and would care for the admission of the new converts to baptism.

9. *Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision*] The rendering of the first word makes it seem as though the original were an adverb of time. Render, "And the Lord said, &c." We may judge from the language used to him that for some reason the heart of the Apostle was beginning to wax faint, and that he was in danger of bodily maltreatment. The communication was made in the same way as the call to come over into Macedonia (xvi. 9, 10). Only here the Lord appeared to his servant.

speak, and hold not thy peace] An exhortation to even more continuous preaching than before. Let nothing stop thy testimony.

10 not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no *man* shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.
11 And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12—17. *Paul is accused before Gallio, who declines to consider the charge against him. In consequence the populace fall at once on Sosthenes, a chief man among the Jews, but Gallio lets their assault pass unnoticed.*

12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews

10. *for I am with thee*] The pronoun is expressed emphatically in the Greek, *and no man shall set on thee to hurt* [**harm**] *thee.* There will be assailants. Christ does not promise him freedom from attack. But the enemy shall not be able to do him violence. And this appearance of Christ would give the Apostle the confidence of the prophet of old (2 Kings vi. 16), "They that be with us are more than they that be with them."

for I have much people in this city] How important and extensive was the Christian community at Corinth we may gather from the Epistles which St Paul wrote afterwards to the Church there. And as the city was one of the great centres of commercial activity at this period, we can see how important it was (humanly speaking) for the Church to make good its footing there from the first. The Lord mercifully by this vision gave his servant assurance that his words should be largely blessed, and rising up thus comforted, he was ready for any task.

11. *And he continued* [**dwelt**] *there*] In these words the historian seems to be expressing the content which pervaded the Apostle's mind after the vision. Neither the A. V. nor the Revised rendering gives to the full the meaning of the Greek. The verb is generally rendered "to sit down," and here seems to be applied purposely to the restful state of the Apostle's mind after the comforting revelation. The same verb is used by St Luke (xxiv. 49), "*Tarry* ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high," where the admonition is of like character with the advice given here to St Paul. In no other place in the New Testament is the word similarly used.

a year and six months] And beside his teaching to the Corinthians he wrote at this time the two Epistles to the Thessalonians which are the first in order of date among the Apostolic letters, and probably the earliest part of the whole New Testament.

12—17. PAUL IS ACCUSED BEFORE GALLIO, WHO DECLINES TO CONSIDER THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM. IN CONSEQUENCE THE POPULACE FALL AT ONCE ON SOSTHENES, A CHIEF MAN AMONG THE JEWS, BUT GALLIO LETS THEIR ASSAULT PASS UNNOTICED.

12. *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia*] Better, **But** *when*

made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought
him to the judgment seat, saying, This *fellow* persuadeth 13
men to worship God contrary to the law. And when Paul 14
was *now* about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the

Gallio was **proconsul** *of Achaia* (so *R. V.*). The narrative is about to enter on something which was adverse to the spirit of quiet rest mentioned in the previous verse, therefore "but" is the fitting conjunction. To give the governor of the province his proper title is of much importance, and here forms a mark of the fidelity of the narrative. Achaia was a Roman province. Such provinces belonged either to the Senate or to the Emperor. When they were senatorial the governor was styled Proconsul. Now Achaia had been a senatorial province under Augustus, but under Tiberius was an imperial province for a time, but after A.D. 44 under Claudius (Suet. *Claud.* XXV.), which is the reign in which these events in St Paul's life occurred, it was once more made senatorial and so had a Proconsul at this period for its governor. This Gallio was the brother of the famous philosopher Seneca, who was tutor and for a time minister of the Emperor Nero. Originally Gallio was called Marcus Annæus Novatus, and took the name of Gallio from the orator Lucius Junius Gallio, by whom he was adopted. The character of Gallio as described by his Roman contemporaries is that of a most bright, popular, and affectionate man. He is spoken of as "Sweet Gallio," and Seneca declares that "those who love him to the utmost, don't love him enough."

the Jews made insurrection [Better (with *R. V.*), **rose up**] *with one accord against Paul*] They probably thought to avail themselves of the inexperience of a newly arrived proconsul, and by appearing in a body to obtain the expulsion of the Apostle from their city.

and brought him to the judgment seat] To Gallio they would seem a company of Jews accusing one of their own race of some erroneous teaching. If he had only lately come from Rome, he would be likely to have heard there of the troubles about "Christus" (see above on verse 2), and he would consider that he had come into the midst of a quarrel about the same matter.

13. *contrary to the law*] i.e. the Jewish law. Their religion was one of those allowed throughout the Roman Empire, and their hope is to induce the proconsul to protect the Jewish law by Roman law. But the majesty of Roman power was far too august to be invoked for settling a quarrel between the members of a merely "tolerated" religion. He would not meddle in their matters.

14. *And* (But) *when Paul was now about to open his mouth*] There is nothing in the Gk. which requires the word "now." The Roman has too much contempt for the whole matter and all who are concerned in it to listen to any defence. For the law of the Jews, its breach or its observance, he has no care, and will not be used by either party.

Gallio said unto the Jews] He does not need to hear both sides of a question about which he will give no opinion.

Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye*
15 Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: but if it
be a question of words and names, and *of* your law, look ye
16 *to it;* for I will be no judge of such *matters*. And he drave
17 them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took

If **indeed** *it were a matter of wrong or of wicked lewdness* **(villany)**] The old word "lewdness" has grown to have a different meaning from that which it had when the A. V. was made. The two things of which the magistrate would take account are (1) any evil doing (cp. xxiv. 20), an act of injustice, or (2) any unscrupulous conduct involving moral wrong. He would be, that is, a minister of law and equity, for that was his duty.

reason would that I should bear with you] He shews by his language how far he feels the Roman citizen above the tolerated Jews. But if their case called for its exercise they should have the benefit of toleration and he would inquire into matters that were the business of his office.

15. *But if* **they are questions about** *words and names*] The oldest authorities give the plural "questions," and there would no doubt have been many points brought forward from St Paul's teaching to which the Jews would object. And whether Jesus was the Christ or not would seem to the Roman a matter entirely of definition, and on which the law had no bearing. If he had heard the name of "Christus" at Rome, it would make Gallio the more ready to imitate his royal master, and get rid of the disputants as fast and as far as possible.

and of your law] Better, *and of* your own *law*. The words are literally "the law among (or according to) you." The accusers had without doubt been striving to make out that in teaching a different manner of worship (ver. 13) Paul was bringing forward a religion not enjoying toleration by the Roman government. But Gallio sees through their intention, and counting them all for Jews, he will not be drawn into their questions.

look ye to it] Better, *look to it* yourselves (as *R. V.*). The pronoun is very emphatic in the Greek.

for I will be no judge of such matters] The oldest authorities omit "for," and the *Revised Version* makes it plain that "will" is not here an auxiliary verb, as it often is in English. "*I* am not minded to be a *judge of* these *matters*." Gallio knows his own business and will only mind that. It is not a case where his jurisdiction can interfere, and so he leaves the whole untouched. There is no question here about his own regard and disregard of enquiries about religion. He sits to administer Roman law, and this dispute among the Jews at Corinth lies outside his cognizance altogether.

16. *And he drave them from the judgment seat*] The description given by St Luke makes it probable that the seat of Gallio was in some open public place, where all might come and bring their plaints.

Sosthenes, the *chief* ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those *things*.

18—23. *Paul leaves Corinth to go into Syria, halting a short time at Cenchrea and somewhat longer at Ephesus. He lands at Cesarea, goes up to Jerusalem and from thence to Antioch, and after a time departs on his third missionary journey.*

The proconsul would be attended by his lictors and other officials, and those he now commands to clear the place of these troublesome cavillers about words and names. The new magistrate found perhaps enough to do in matters which came within his jurisdiction in the busy mercantile life of Corinth.

17. *Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue*] The conjunction is too strongly rendered in the A.V. The oldest MSS. omit "the Greeks" which is very like a marginal gloss that has been introduced into the text by some scribe. Here as before (ver. 8) omit "chief." Render (with *R. V.*), And *they all* laid hold on *Sosthenes the ruler of the synagogue*. The verb is used (xxi. 30) of the violent action of the mob at Jerusalem, and just afterwards (xxi. 33) of the chief captain's conduct when he rescued Paul. Neither would be very gentle measures. And we may understand something of the same kind here. The surrounding crowd, of whom no doubt most would be Greeks, catching the tone of the magistrate, prepared to follow up his decision by a lesson of their own, of a rather rough kind. Sosthenes had probably been the spokesman of the Jews, and Paul would not improbably have some sympathizers among the Gentiles. And "Jew-baiting" was not unknown in those days. So with impunity the crowd could wreak their own vengeance on these interrupters of the proper business of the court, and beat Sosthenes before he was out of the magistrate's presence. The name Sosthenes was a very common one, and we need not identify this man with the Sosthenes mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 1.

And Gallio cared for none of those things] Neither for the questions raised nor for those who raised them. How little Jewish life was regarded by the Romans is shewn in many places in their literature (see Farrar's *St Paul*, vol. I. Exc. XIV.). Tiberius banished four thousand of them to Sardinia, saying that if the unhealthy climate killed them off "it would be a cheap loss" (Tac. *Ann.* II. 85). Coming from Rome where such feeling was universal, the lives and limbs of a few Jews would appear of small importance, and like the Emperor just named he may have thought it mattered little what became of them.

18—23. PAUL LEAVES CORINTH TO GO INTO SYRIA, HALTING A SHORT TIME AT CENCHREA AND SOMEWHAT LONGER AT EPHESUS. HE LANDS AT CESAREA, GOES UP TO JERUSALEM

18 And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and
then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into
Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila: having shorn *his*
19 head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. And he came to

AND FROM THENCE TO ANTIOCH, AND AFTER A TIME DEPARTS ON HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

18. *And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while*] Lit. **many days.** This appears to be after the appearance before Gallio. We are told (ver. 11) that he settled quietly for a year and six months. Then came an opportunity of attacking him on Gallio's arrival. Of this the Jews tried to avail themselves, and when their attempt was at an end, the Apostle had another time of peace among his converts. So that the whole stay in Corinth extended over more than a year and a half.

sailed thence into (better, **for**) *Syria*] We have no motive given why the Apostle at this time sailed back. Some have suggested that he was carrying a contribution to the brethren in Jerusalem. It is clear that when the return was resolved on, he wished to reach Jerusalem as soon as possible, for he declined to tarry in Ephesus even though his preaching was more readily received there than by the Jews in many other places. It may have been the wish to fulfil his vow, which could only be brought to its conclusion by a visit to the temple in Jerusalem.

having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow] We can observe all through the narrative of the Acts that St Paul, although the Apostle of the Gentiles, did not cease to regard the festivals and ceremonies of the Jews in things which did not militate against the Christian liberty. For some reason, either during sickness or in the midst of his conflict at Corinth, he had taken a vow upon himself of the nature of the Nazarite vows (Numb. vi. 1—21). This could only be brought to its fitting close by a journey to Jerusalem to offer up the hair, which it was a part of the vow, to leave uncut. At Jerusalem when the ceremony was completed the head was shaven (see Acts xxi. 24), but it seems to have been allowed to persons at a distance to cut the hair short and to bring that with them to the temple and offer it up when the rest was shaven. This appears to be what St Paul did at this time, at Cenchreæ, before starting on the voyage to Syria. The Greek word for "having shorn" stands in the original next to Aquila, and some have contended from this that it was he who had the vow, and cut his hair. They have pointed out also that the order of the names "Priscilla and Aquila" seems to have been adopted purposely to make this connexion of words possible. But the name of the wife stands before that of her husband in Rom. xvi. 3; see also 2 Tim. iv. 19; and may have been so placed because by her zeal she made herself a very conspicuous member of the Church wherever she lived. But it seems very unlikely that all this detail of a vow and its observance would be so prominently mentioned in connexion with Aquila, who played but a small part in St Luke's history; while it is a most significant feature in the conduct of St Paul that he so oft conformed to Jewish observances.

Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they 20
desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means 21

19. *And he* [they] *came to Ephesus*] The oldest authorities have the plural number here. Ephesus was the famous city, capital of Ionia, and afterwards the scene of a large period of St John's labours. It stood not far from the sea on some hilly ground by a small river which flows into the sea in the district lying between the greater rivers, the Hermus and the Meander. In St Paul's day it was by far the busiest and most populous city in Proconsular Asia. For a more complete account of its inhabitants and the special worship of Artemis (Diana) for which it was celebrated, a fitting place will be found in the notes on chap. xix.

and left them there] Aquila and Priscilla probably had business connexions with the large city of Ephesus, which caused them to end their journey here. These people though working at their trade appear to have been above the position which would be implied by Dr Farrar's expression (*St Paul* I. 573) "his lodging in the *squalid* shop of Aquila and Priscilla." They travelled about and lived now at Rome, now at Ephesus, and now in Corinth (1 Cor. xvi. 19; Rom. xvi. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 19), and on their condition when in Ephesus, see above on verse 2.

entered into the synagogue] He could not give up his own people, though he was constantly exposed to hard usage by them; so he seeks them out again here as soon as he arrives. In Ephesus however his message seems to have been received with less hostility, for those who heard him begged him to stay a longer time. The cosmopolitan character of the Ephesian population may have had something to do with this.

20. **And** *when they desired* (**asked**) *him to tarry* **a** *longer time with them*] The oldest texts omit the last two words. The verb is one most frequently rendered "to ask." We need not suppose that more impression had been produced on this occasion than made the Jews willing to give him a patient hearing.

21. *but bade them farewell*] This is the same verb as in verse 18, and should be rendered in the same way. "*But took his leave of them.*" The oldest authorities and the best modern editors, followed by the *Revised Version*, omit a large portion of the verse, reading thus: "*but taking his leave of them, and saying, I will return again unto you, if God will, he set sail from Ephesus.*" The words thus omitted are deemed to have been an insertion suggested by xx. 16. It is not only on the authority of a small number of uncials that the words are rejected; their omission is supported by several cursives, as well as by the Vulgate and some other versions.

There has been much discussion on the question whether it was the feast of the Passover or the Pentecost which the Apostle desired to keep in Jerusalem. If we accept the omission, as the authorities seem fully to warrant, the question is not raised.

keep *this* feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.
22 And when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up, and
23 saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. And after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

24—28. *Visit of Apollos to Ephesus, and his teaching there. He is more fully instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, and*

I will return again unto you] Having the opportunity, he soon redeemed his promise, see xix. 1.

22. *Cesarea*] (See viii. 40.) This was the home of Philip the Evangelist, and we may suppose that St Paul would make the success of his distant mission known to his fellow-labourer. He made the house of Philip his home in Cæsarea on a later occasion (xxi. 8).

gone up] i. e. from the coast town to the city of Jerusalem.

and saluted the church] This is a very brief notice of a visit to the centre of all church life and action at this time. And we cannot but be surprised that there is no mention (as in xiv. 27) of a gathering of the church, and of the report of what the great missionary had been enabled to effect. Dr Farrar (*St Paul*, II. 5) suggests that St Paul met with a cold and ungracious reception, and that the position which he assumed towards the Law in his preaching to Gentile converts, raised him up adversaries among the Christians in Jerusalem, who were naturally zealous for the Law. It is certainly strange that even the name of the city is not mentioned, nor are we told a word about the fulfilment of the vow. For some reason or other, the Apostle hastened, as soon as his salutations were ended, to the more congenial society of the Christians at Antioch who had rejoiced over his success on a former visit.

23. *And after he had spent some time there*] Having felt for themselves the troubles of the Judaizers, the people at Antioch would sympathize with the Apostle, if he were experiencing like opposition now to his own work.

he departed] Starting from Antioch as on both his former missions.

and went over all the country (region) *of Galatia and Phrygia in order*] Taking no doubt the same direction as before, and so visiting Lystra and Derbe, before he came to the more northern portions of Asia Minor.

strengthening all the disciples] The verb is elsewhere always rendered "confirming" both in the A.V. and in the *Revised Version* (cp. xiv. 22; xv. 32, 41). Here in the *Rev. Ver.* it is changed to "stablishing" which does perhaps contain the idea of "making firm" a little more fully than "strengthen" does. "Confirming" was to be avoided here because of the use of that word now as signifying the Church's rite of "Confirmation."

afterwards passing over into Achaia, preaches Christ there with great power.

And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, 24
an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to
Ephesus. This *man* was instructed in the way of the Lord; 25

24—28. VISIT OF APOLLOS TO EPHESUS, AND HIS TEACHING THERE. HE IS MORE FULLY INSTRUCTED BY AQUILA AND PRISCILLA, AND AFTERWARDS PASSING OVER INTO ACHAIA, PREACHES CHRIST THERE WITH GREAT POWER.

24. *And* [**Now**] *a certain Jew named Apollos*] As this interposed narrative about Apollos is an unconnected digression, preparatory to what will be mentioned in the following chapter, it is better to render the conjunction by a less distinctly conjunctive word. So "Now" is better than "And."

The name Apollos is an abbreviation of Apollonius, which is read in one MS. (D). His influence as a Christian teacher made itself most felt in Corinth. (Cp. 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 5, iv. 6.)

born at Alexandria (lit. an Alexandrian by birth)] On Alexandria as a place abounding with Jews cp. vi. 9. It was in Alexandria and by Jews that the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament was made.

an eloquent man] The word in the original expresses not only ability as an orator, but also the possession of stores of learning. Hence the *Rev. Ver.* gives "learned." Either rendering only gives half the idea. He was learned and could use his learning with effect.

came to Ephesus, and he was *mighty in the Scriptures*] This is the arrangement and construction of the original. The study of the Old Testament flourished greatly in Alexandria, and Apollos had great power in the exposition and application of these Scriptures. The literary activity and philosophic pursuits of the Greek population of Alexandria were not without their effect on the more conservative Jews, and we find from many sources that the Jewish writings were studied with all the literary exactness which marked the Greek scholarship of the time, and the Jews, conscious of the antiquity of their own records and yet impressed with the philosophic character of their cultured fellow-citizens, bent themselves greatly to find analogies between the Mosaic writings and the teachings of the schools. In study like this Apollos had no doubt been fully trained.

25. *This man was instructed in the way of the Lord*] Nothing is gained by pressing the tense of the original into the "had been instructed" of the *Revised Version*. If he *had been* instructed he consequently *was* instructed. The word for instructed is that from which comes the English "catechize." Hence it implies a course of teaching distinct from his own study of the Scriptures. We know from Josephus (*Antiq.* XVIII. 5. 2) that the teaching and baptism of John produced great effect among the Jews. We need not therefore wonder at finding among Jews at Jerusalem and Ephesus men who had accepted

and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the *things* of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of
26 John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue:

the Baptist's teaching about Jesus. But in considering such cases we must remember where such instruction as they had received would stop short. They would know that John baptized in preparation for the coming of the kingdom, they would have heard that he pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God, being certified thereof when He came to be baptized. But when John was dead and the life of Jesus was brought to a close on Calvary, except the few of John's disciples who had joined the followers of our Lord, none would know of the way in which the foundations of the heavenly kingdom were laid, none would understand the institution of the Sacraments, nor the sending down of the Holy Ghost, nor the teaching of repentance, and of the gift of salvation to the faithful through grace. Of these things John had known nothing, and we must not forget in our attempt to estimate his work and its effects, that there came to himself a day when he sent to Christ to ask "Art thou He that should come?" (Matth. xi. 3.)

and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught **carefully** *the things* **concerning Jesus**] These variations from the A.V. are warranted by the best texts of the original. As "the spirit" intended is Apollos' own it is better to omit the article. The adverb rendered "carefully" indicates the accuracy with which he proclaimed all that he had been taught. "The things of the Lord" seems to have been the suggestion of some one who did not understand the plain statement of the text. In the previous expression "the way of the Lord" we have only the Old Test. words (Is. xl. 3) quoted by the Evangelists concerning John's preaching. (Matth. iii. 3; Mark i. 3.) There may have been some timidity felt about the further statement that Apollos taught the things "concerning Jesus," and so the reading of the early part of the verse was brought in here also. But after what has been said above we can see how this Alexandrian Jew might publish with the utmost accuracy all that John had proclaimed about the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, and enforce it from his own studies of the Old Testament Scriptures, he might declare how John had pointed to Jesus, and might even relate much of the works and words of Christ, as an evidence that God was sending greater prophets than they had known for long, and that therefore Christ's life was a testimony that redemption was near. All this he might know and preach most carefully, and yet lack all that further knowledge which Aquila and Priscilla imparted.

knowing only the baptism of John] In this sentence we have the solution of any difficulty which there may seem to be in the verse. He knew nothing of that other baptism, which is the entrance into Christ's kingdom, and therefore he could merely be looking forward for the fulfilment of the prophecies, and the power of his teaching would consist in the zealous way which he published that the voice of God in His older Revelation proclaimed Messiah's advent very near.

26. *And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue*] For the Jews

whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, 27

were not all ready to listen to announcements of the approach of the Messiah. The speaker must be prepared with arguments as well as courage who dwelt on this theme, about which the Jews had been deluded by many impostors.

But *when Priscilla and Aquila heard* **him**] This is the commencement of a new sentence in the original, and the oldest texts put the name of the wife before that of her husband as in ver. 18. By joining her in this marked way with Aquila in the communications with Apollos, the historian indicates that she was a woman of great power and zeal among the Christians. It has been suggested that she was perhaps a born Jewess and her husband not so, which might account for the prominence given in several places to her name. It may be noted here, as so often, that Aquila and his wife, like the other Judæo-Christians, still attended the worship of the synagogue.

they took him unto them] He would be much more in sympathy with them than with the Jewish congregation. He was prepared to accept the Messiah, but did not yet understand that Jesus was He.

and expounded unto him the way of God more **carefully**] The adverb here is the same as in the previous verse, and the use of it seems to shew that the studies of Aquila and his wife in the Scriptures had been of the same earnest kind as those of Apollos. By the "way of God" we must understand God's further working out of the Old Testament prediction in the closing events of the life of Jesus, and in the gift of the Holy Ghost. That Joel's prophecy, quoted by St Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 16), had been thus fulfilled, was new learning for the eloquent Alexandrian. As also the newly appointed means of grace in baptism and the breaking of bread, with the promise of salvation to faith in Christ. These also may be included as part of the "way of God," being means whereby men are brought nearer to Him.

27 *And when he was* **minded** *to pass* **over** *into Achaia*] The original expresses more than an inclination on his part; he wished to go. We find from xix. 1 that the centre of his labours there was Corinth. Being acquainted with the philosophy and learning of Greece he was well fitted to be a preacher to the Greeks as well as to the Jews, and he may have felt that Corinth was the place where he could do most good. We are not told of any Apostolic commission to Apollos, but we know from 1 Cor. i. 12, &c. that he came to be regarded by some Corinthians as the equal of St Paul, and that there arose some strong party feeling in that Church, which is rebuked in St Paul's letter to them. We cannot suppose that this was brought about by Apollos, for St Paul speaks of him as watering what he himself had planted, and it may be that the knowledge of the existence of such a spirit accounts for the unwillingness of Apollos to come back to Corinth (1 Cor. xvi. 12) which we read of somewhat later.

the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had be-
28 lieved through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

1—7. *Paul returning to Ephesus finds there some disciples of John the Baptist.*

19 And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth,

the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him] Here the A. V. makes the disciples in Achaia the object of the exhortation. The construction in the original is not quite clear, but the order of the words seems in favour of the Revised rendering, "the brethren *encouraged* him and wrote to the disciples, &c." though the pronoun "him" is not expressed in the Greek. Here we find the first instance of letters of commendation sent from one Church to another. "The brethren" at Ephesus must have been a small number, but Aquila and Priscilla would be well known to the Christians in Corinth.

who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace] So far as the Greek is concerned the last two words may be connected either with "helped" or "believed." But as the history is occupied with the work of Apollos, it seems more natural to explain the "grace" spoken of, as the gift which was already in Apollos, and which the more full instruction that he had just received had tended to increase. He had formerly been but partially enlightened. Now that he knows the truth in Christ, his former ability becomes more helpful still. His work seems rightly estimated by St Paul, "he watered" what the Apostle had "planted" (1 Cor. iii. 6).

28. *for he mightily convinced the Jews*] The verb expresses more than is given thus. He brought the objections of the Jews to the test of Scripture and confuted them. The disciples, who had already believed, appear to have been suffering from Jewish gainsayers. It was by his power in the Scriptures that Apollos was helpful against these adversaries of the faith. The *Revised Version* has changed "mightily" into "powerfully" to little profit. Shakespeare says "you have mightily persuaded" (*As you Like it*, 1. 2. 218).

and that publickly] By his discourses in the synagogue. This was an important feature in the help that Apollos gave. He was a learned Jew, able to set forth to whole Jewish congregations how their Scriptures were receiving their fulfilment. Thus they who already believed would be strengthened.

shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ] See above, on ver. 5. The Jews had complained before Gallio that St Paul's teaching was a religion "contrary to the law." Those who heard Apollos learnt that in Jesus they were accepting the "fulfiller of the law."

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Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, 2
Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be *any* Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto 3

XIX. 1—7. Paul returning to Ephesus finds there some disciples of John the Baptist.

1. *And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth*] The digression concerning Apollos being ended, the history now returns to St Paul. Apollos found, no doubt, that Corinth was the most effective centre for his work in Achaia, and apparently made that his head-quarters.

Paul having passed through the upper country] The English word "coasts" (A. V.) is now confined in meaning to the *sea-shore*, formerly it signified any "border-land." The parts actually visited by St Paul were far away from the sea. Indeed the adjective rendered "upper" signifies "that part to which men go up, away from the sea." It is applied here to the more Eastern parts of Asia Minor. The Apostle's journey was most likely through the districts of Lycaonia, Galatia and Phrygia which he had visited before.

came to Ephesus] In fulfilment of the conditional promise made by him when he left (xviii. 21).

and finding certain disciples] The participle, indicated by the A. V., is not supported by the oldest texts. Read with *R. V.* "and found." These men are called *disciples*, because they were, like Apollos, to a certain extent instructed concerning Jesus, and what they already knew drew them to listen to St Paul who could teach them more.

2. and *he said unto them*] The different reading in the last verse renders a conjunction needful here, and this the oldest MSS. have.

Did ye receive *the Holy Ghost* when ye believed?] The two verbs in the original are in the same tense, and there is nothing to justify the "since" of the A. V. The description of the state of these disciples is not easy to understand. St Paul addresses them as believers. But this perhaps is only because they presented themselves among the real Christian disciples, and his recent arrival made it impossible for him to know the history of all who appeared among the members of the congregation. He presumes they are believers from the company in which he finds them.

And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether *the Holy Ghost* was [given] This rendering of the Revised Version makes the sense more clear than did the A. V., but even yet requires explanation. Of the existence of the Holy Ghost no disciples of John could (as might be conceived from the A. V.) be ignorant, for in his preaching he had proclaimed that the baptism of Him who was to come after him should be with the Holy Ghost and with fire. But in the Greek where, as in this verse, the expression "Spirit" or "Holy Spirit" is found without an article (although in English we are forced

what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's
4 baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized *with* the
baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they
should believe on him which should come after him, that is,
5 on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were baptized

to put "the" before it) it signifies not the personal Comforter, but an operation or gift of the Holy Spirit. Thus in John vii. 39, the A. V. rightly renders "the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*," although there is no verb for "given," because the noun is without an article in the Greek, and so signifies "a spiritual outpouring." These disciples at Ephesus, then, imply by their answer not that the name "Holy Ghost" was strange, but that they were unacquainted (as was the Baptist himself) with any special bestowal of the gifts of the Spirit.

3. *And he said*] The oldest authorities omit "unto them," and it is more natural to do so in the account of these brief questions and answers.

Into *what then were ye baptized?*] The New Testament phrase is "baptized in" or "into," to express the close union with God into which men are brought by baptism.

And they said, Into *John's baptism*] They may have been disciples of Apollos and have been baptized by him before his more full instruction by Aquila and Priscilla.

4. *Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance*] More simply, *And Paul said*. The best MSS. omit the word for "verily." Such was John's description of his own baptism (Matt. iii. 11), but after the day of Pentecost the language of the Christian preacher (Acts ii. 38) is, "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." These Ephesian disciples knew nothing of baptism for the remission of sins, or of the other sacrament of the Lord's Supper, nor of the gift of the Spirit to the church, nor of the doctrines of faith in Christ and salvation by grace through faith.

saying unto the people, that they should believe] The demand for faith makes the difference between the preaching of Christ and the preaching of John. The latter said "Prepare by repentance for the coming King," Christ says (and John also spake of this) "Believe on me, for I am He that should come."

on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus] The oldest MSS. omit "Christ." In his preaching John had constantly used the phrase "He that cometh after me." This was the stage of instruction at which these disciples had arrived. They knew that John spake of one who was to come. St Paul's teaching made clear to them that this was Jesus. The closing words of the sentence are a condensation of all the explanations by which the Apostle convinced them, that Jesus, whom he preached, was the prophet whom John announced. St Luke does not anywhere give speeches or arguments *in extenso*, but only so much as is needed to explain the results which he describes.

in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid 6
his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and
they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men 7
were about twelve.

5. And *when they heard this*] The A. V. omits the conjunction which stands in the *Textus Receptus*. What they heard was not the mere statement that Jesus was the Messiah; but all the arguments with which St Paul demonstrated that this was so, and proved that in Him the Scriptures were fulfilled. The conviction need not have been sudden, though its description is brief.

they were baptized **into** *the name of the Lord Jesus*] They followed the order appointed for admission to the privileges of the Christian covenant. No argument can be drawn from this verse for a repetition of baptism. These disciples had never received such a baptism as Christ ordained. John's baptism was but a washing symbolical of the repentance which he preached; baptism into the name of Christ is the pledge of a covenant of salvation.

6. *And when Paul*, &c.] The gift of the Holy Ghost to these disciples appears to have been a special provision of the Spirit for the great work which was to change Ephesus, from the city wholly devoted to the goddess Diana, into the centre of Christian life throughout the west of Asia Minor for several centuries.

and they spake with tongues] A Pentecostal outpouring, for as in Jerusalem the gift wrought its effect among the Jews then gathered there from every quarter, so was the Spirit given in this great centre of Gentile activity that a like result might follow, and that the amazement and marvel at such a power might win attention to the message and gain converts to Christ.

and prophesied] Probably in this case to be understood of the exposition of Old Testament prophecy, and the power of preaching bestowed on them by the gift of the Holy Ghost. The foretelling of future events would be no such help to the cause of Christ as would the power of prophecy in the other sense.

7. *And all the men were about twelve*] The *Revised Version* "And they were in all about twelve men," is a more strict rendering of the Greek, but it does not give a different sense, and "men" in that position receives an undue accent.

The verse has been the cause of much remark. Why the inspired historian should speak with an "about," has been asked by some. With that we are not concerned, only to observe that the Spirit has not prompted him to speak otherwise. Some have seen in the number and the circumstances a resemblance to the Apostles and their supernatural endowment; others have looked back as far as the Patriarchs and have made of these men the beginning of another Israel. May it not be that the "about" was written to admonish us of the unprofitableness of such speculations? Cp. Josh. vii. 5.

8—20. *Paul preaches to the Jews first and afterwards to the Gentiles. The Word of God prevails mightily.*

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for
the space of three months, disputing and persuading the
9 *things* concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers
were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of *that*
way before the multitude, he departed from them, and

8—20. PAUL PREACHES TO THE JEWS FIRST AND AFTERWARDS TO THE GENTILES. THE WORD OF GOD PREVAILS MIGHTILY.

8. *And he* **entered** *into the synagogue*] As the incident of John's disciples is mentioned before anything else, it seems likely that St Paul found them among the few Christian brethren in Ephesus, and began his teaching of them before he commenced his visits to the synagogue.

and spake boldly for the space of three months] Going there, that is, on all occasions of religious service, and so giving to his brethren of Israel a full opportunity of hearing all his reasoning, and inquiring whether what he taught was in accordance with the Scriptures. The abiding a longer time with them, which they had asked for (xviii. 20) on his previous visit, does not seem to have gained him more adherents among the Jews. Perhaps he had noticed when the request was made that it was not with great fervour. Otherwise, it is not like the Apostle to pass by an opened door.

disputing [Better, **reasoning**] *and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God*] The *Rev. Ver.* has improved the translation in "reasoning," but the italic "*as to*" before "the things" is needless. The first participle is the same word as in xvii. 2, and though "from the Scriptures" is not added here as there, we may surely understand it, and that the persuasion spoken of afterwards was no greater display of gentleness than the Apostle used at other times.

9. *But when divers were hardened, and believed not*] Perhaps there may be a little gain to those unfamiliar with older English in putting (as *Rev. Ver.*) "some" for "divers," there seems to be none in giving "and disobedient" instead of "and believed not." The original looks back to the verb "persuade" in the previous verse. The Apostle tried to *persuade*, these men *refused to be persuaded*. That seems better expressed by the A. V.

but spake [better, **speaking**] *evil of that* [**the**] *way before the multitude*] The evil speaking is the final manifestation of the hardening. The Apostle continued his exhortations to stony-hearted hearers for three months, but when their obstinacy changed into malignity he left them. "The way" was soon given as a distinctive name to "the Christian religion." See note on ix. 2 and cf. below ver. 23.

It was not mere opposition to the arguments of the Apostle which these Jews employed, they took occasion to excite the crowds of the city against him. And it would seem from verse 33, where the Jews attempt to put forward a spokesman in the tumult, that they wished the

separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two 10
years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the

heathen populace to understand that Paul was not approved of by his own nationality.

he departed from them] i.e. ceased to take part in the public services at the synagogue.

and separated the disciples] The Christian part of the congregation, with any of the Jews who were more interested than the rest in his teaching.

disputing [Better, reasoning] *daily*] The verb is the same as in the previous verse. Among these more sympathizing hearers, he would only have to set forward the arguments for the faith which he preached unto them. His teaching now could go on constantly, and was not confined to the synagogue times of service.

in the school of one Tyrannus] The best authorities omit "one." The teacher, whether a heathen or a Jew, was a man well known. Otherwise we can conceive no reason for the mention of a proper name. As the name is Greek, some have thought that the place meant was the lecture-room of a philosophic teacher; others, thinking that St Paul would hardly have chosen such a place for his preaching, have preferred to consider it a Jewish school or *Beth-Hammidrash*, in which his Jewish hearers would be more willing to assemble. Since the listeners are described, in the next verse, as being partly Jews, and partly Greeks, it is impossible to arrive at a conclusion. No doubt the Jews in Ephesus were numerous enough to render such "schools" necessary for their education, and in their intercourse with Gentiles they not unfrequently adopted a Gentile name in addition to their Jewish one. So Tyrannus may have been a Jew.

10. *And this continued by the space of two years*] The *Rev. Ver.* changes "by" into "for." As Englishmen still take a house at so much "*by* the week, or the year," the older phrase might well be retained, as the Revisers do in xx. 31. Speaking to the Ephesian elders at Miletus the Apostle says he ceased not to admonish the church there for "*three* years." The two statements need not be conflicting. To the two years mentioned here when the three months of verse 8 are added, and the time which may have preceded his teaching in the synagogue (see on ver. 8), the duration of the Apostle's stay in Ephesus would be described in Jewish reckoning as "three years," which in their mode of speech need only consist of one whole year, and parts of that which preceded, and that which followed it. Cp. The reckoning of *three* days between the crucifixion and the resurrection.

so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard, &c.] The oldest authorities omit "Jesus" from this clause. By *Asia* is meant "proconsular Asia" (see note on ii. 10). The seed of the seven churches of the Apocalypse was sown in these two years. It is evident from the tumult described in this chapter that the Christian teaching was making as much way among the Gentiles as among the Jews. The language of St Luke here

11 word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God
12 wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

implies that the audience of St Paul was made up not of the settled inhabitants of Ephesus only, but of those who visited the city for business or pleasure, and carried news of the preacher and his message to all corners of the district. Philemon from Colossæ may have been one of St Paul's converts during this time.

11. *And God wrought special miracles* [Gr. powers] *by the hands of Paul*] The language of the historian is noteworthy. God works, Paul is the instrument. (Cp. The mighty hand of Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 12.) The imperfect tense of the verb in the Greek implies that these manifestations of God's power were continued during the Apostle's stay. This was no mere spasmodic excitement over some powerful discourse. "By the hands" is probably only the Jewish mode of expressing "by." See note on v. 12.

12. *so that from his body were brought unto the sick*] In the oldest MSS. the verb signifies "to be carried away from." The *Rev. Version* brings out the meaning fully, and in a verse like this it is well to keep, as much as may be, the Greek order of the words. Read "Insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body." St Luke is careful to intimate that the Apostle did not of himself adopt or recommend these methods, but the faith of the converts was such that it manifested itself in this way, and God was pleased to bestow blessings because of their faith. In the city of Ephesus where, as we find from this chapter, exorcism and "curious arts" of witchcraft and incantation were familiarly exercised, God appears to have made the cures that were wrought to be specially evidences of the power of faith. Paul does not go to the sick, and even the sons of Sceva (ver. 13) recognise that it is not to Paul, but to Jesus whom he preacheth, that the "powers" are to be ascribed. Thus was God's minister made to differ from the pretenders to miraculous power with which the Ephesian people were familiar. A specimen of these may be seen in the life of Apollonius of Tyana, iv. 3 (*Kayser*, p. 66).

handkerchiefs or aprons] Some take the latter word to signify the cincture, by which the loose robes of the Orientals were gathered together round the waist. This would be expressed by "belts" or "girdles." Others think they were the aprons used by the Apostle while working at his trade. The derivation of the word favours the latter sense. They seem to have been employed to cover the front half of the dress during work.

and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them] The oldest texts omit the last two words. These converts acted on the popular belief, that virtue proceeded from the bodies of our Lord and His Apostles. St Luke notices this belief in his Gospel

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon 13
them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of
the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul
preacheth. And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, 14

(viii. 44) and St Mark says of Jesus (v. 30) "perceiving in himself that the power proceeding from him had gone forth." The words of Scripture can hardly be made to countenance, though they recognise, the popular belief. Yet, even though these men employed means which were unnecessary and superstitious to display their faith, because of the reality of this faith God did not suffer it to lose its reward.

13. *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists*] The best MSS. have "And *certain* also, &c." In addition to the real, though ignorant, faith of the converts alluded to in verse 12, some impostors, who had no faith, tried to win more credit for their jugglery by employing the names of Paul and Jesus. These were certain Jews who went about from place to place, professing by charms and spells to cure diseases. The A.V. "vagabond" conveys in modern language a moral censure, which probably these men well deserved, but which is not in the Greek. The *Rev. Ver.* has adopted strolling, which gives the sense of the original. We read in Josephus (*Ant.* VIII. 2. 5) that "God gave Solomon skill against demons for the help and cure of men. And he arranged certain incantations whereby diseases are assuaged, and left behind him forms of *exorcism*, wherewith they so put to flight the overpowered evil spirits that they never return. And this method of curing is very prevalent among us up to the present time." The Jews at Ephesus were professors of this pretended art of healing.

took upon them to call [Better, to name] *over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus*] From an early date the traditional literature of the Jews ascribed great effects to the utterance of the incommunicable divine name. By means of this (they say) it was that Moses slew the Egyptian, and Elisha brought destruction on the mocking children "by the name of Jehovah." We can understand therefore, if the fame of St Paul were become known, and the name of Jesus connected with his preaching and with the powers vouchsafed, how these men would make a pretence to the possession of the same secrets by which, as they would declare, the cures were wrought.

saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth] The oldest texts give the singular, I adjure, and this no doubt is correct, for the words would be uttered only by the one person, who was performing the act of exorcism. It is easy to see how the plural form of the first part of the verse suggested the change.

14. *And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests*] The Greek says simply a chief priest, and so *Rev. Ver.* We cannot tell why the title is given to him, but it is most likely that the name was applied to the heads of the twenty-four courses of the Levitical priesthood, who are called in the Old Testament "heads of fathers' houses."

15 *and* chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but
16 who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that *they* fled out of that house naked and
17 wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks

which did so] i.e. which agreed to adopt this form of words in their exorcisms. There is no need to suppose that the whole seven were present in the case about to be named, but only that they were all exorcists, and in their wish to seem the best of their class they determined to use words which should connect them with the Christian preacher through whom many miracles were known to have been wrought.

15. *And the evil spirit answered and said*] The most ancient texts add **unto them**. They had taken upon them to use the name of Jesus, but the result was far contrary to their wishes and intentions. "Evil spirit" is used for the man in whom the spirit was. Cp. Mark iii. 11.

Jesus I know, and Paul I know] The verbs are not the same, though it is hardly possible in a translation to mark the difference. In the first there seems to be intended a recognition and admission of power, in the other a recognition of an appointed ministry thereof. The spirit speaking through the man would intimate: I recognise that Jesus has power over evil spirits, and I know that Paul is a true servant of Jesus, through whom Jesus manifests His power.

but who are ye?] Who are not followers of Jesus, and so are mere pretenders in the use of His name.

16. *And the man in whom the evil spirit was leapt on them*] With that power, more than natural, so often displayed by madmen.

and overcame them] Here we have a singular variation from the texts of the oldest MSS. These read, **both of them**, a reading which seems to preserve for us the information that only *two* of the seven sons were present on this occasion. This reading is not likely to have been substituted for the more simple one, but it is easy to see how the simpler pronoun would come in after the mention of the *seven*, and when there was in the story only this hint that five of them were not there. It is no objection to the acceptance of this old reading, that other words in the verse referring to these brethren are plural, and not dual. Plural verbs and adjectives are not unfrequently used of dual subjects. The verb is more closely translated in the *Rev. Ver.* **mastered.**

and prevailed, &c.] He tare their clothes to shreds, and left marks of the fierce tearing on their bodies.

17. *And this was known to all*] It is better to render, with *Rev. Ver.*, the verb literally, "**became** *known*." It was no doubt a gradual spreading of the story. We may be sure that the "sons of Sceva" said little about it.

also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that 18
believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many also of them which used curious arts brought their 19
books together, and burned *them* before all *men:* and they

the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus] Better, *both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus.* The A. V. does not shew "Jews and Greeks" to be an explanation of the preceding "all," which it is in the original. Exorcists were plentiful enough at Ephesus, and the event would be looked on as a warning.

and fear...magnified] The "fear" was the first feeling and the most widely prevailing, for that would touch all who heard the history; the magnifying of the Lord Jesus was the later effect produced among those to whom Jesus was becoming known and worshipped.

18. *And many that believed*] i.e. who had made a profession of their faith. It was clearly as yet but an imperfect faith. The *Rev. Ver.* "*had believed*" is the more correct tense.

came, and confessed] Came before the Apostle and the Christian brethren, and in their fear owned that their profession had not been followed completely by their practice.

and shewed their deeds] The verb implies "making a public announcement," therefore "declaring" (as *R. V.*) is perhaps nearer to the sense. The "deeds" were those courses of action, connected with witchcraft, sorcery, and exorcism, that were inconsistent with the Christian life. Thus "deeds of the body" is used for *evil* deeds only (Rom. viii. 13). Cp. Luke xxiii. 51.

19. *Many also of them which used curious arts*] The Greek has not the same word for "many" here, as in the previous verse. To mark this the *Rev. Ver.* has here "not a few." The "curious arts" were magic, jugglery and all such practices as make pretence to supernatural agency. The word is used of magic arts both in classical and patristic Greek, and the kindred verb is used of Socrates (Plato, *Apol.* 8) because of his statement concerning his inward spiritual monitor or dæmon.

brought their books together] We have seen above that the Jews had receipts for incantations and exorcisms professedly dating back to the days of Solomon, and among the heathen population of Ephesus such writings were vastly abundant. Indeed "Ephesian letters" was a common expression, signifying charms composed of magic words and worn as amulets, and supposed to be efficacious against all harm. We are told of a wrestler who could not be thrown while he wore such a charm, but who was easily overcome when it was taken away. Some of these amulets were said to be composed of the letters which were upon the crown and girdle and feet of the statue of Artemis in the temple at Ephesus. See Farrar's *St Paul*, II. 26, and the authorities there quoted.

and burned them before [rather, **in the sight of**] *all men.* That is,

counted the price of them, and found *it* fifty thousand *pieces*
20 of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

21, 22. *St Paul's Plans for his Journey from Ephesus.*

21 After these *things* were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must

where all might see who were there. We must remember that what they burnt were rolls of written material, not books after the modern fashion, which are extremely difficult to burn. Such a burning pile must have attracted much notice, and was a proof that the descent of the Holy Ghost (ver. 6) had wrought in Ephesus in the same way as aforetime in Jerusalem.

and they counted the price of them] And in the sacrifice we must think not only of the cost of the books, but of the hopes of gain which were thrown also into the fire by those to whom "curious arts" had been a revenue.

and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver] As the scene of this abjuration was among a Greek population, it is almost certain that the Attic drachma is the coin in which the reckoning is made. As 24 of these were a little more in value than our English pound, we may consider that more than two thousand pounds worth of rolls and slips of magic treatises was consumed.

20. *So mightily grew the word of God*, &c.] The oldest Greek texts have "the word *of the Lord*" (adopted by *R. V.*). The full sense of the words rendered "mightily" is "with overpowering force and strength, which nothing could resist."

21, 22. ST PAUL'S PLANS FOR HIS JOURNEY FROM EPHESUS.

21. *After these things were ended*] The foundations of the Ephesian Church seemed fully laid, when sacrifices of such a kind had been made by the converts, and so St Paul feels that he may leave the seed sown in good hope that it will grow.

Paul purposed in the spirit] i. e. had settled it in his own mind.

when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia] Intending, no doubt, as was his wont, to visit the churches which had been founded on his previous mission (chapp. xvi.—xviii.) from Philippi to Corinth.

to go to Jerusalem] With contributions, as we know, collected throughout the other churches for the needs of the central organization of the Christian movement. See 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3. There this intended journey through Macedonia and to Corinth is alluded to, and the reason assigned for the Apostle's lingering in Ephesus (ver. 8, 9) "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." The opening of the door was manifest in the burning piles of magic books, of the many adversaries we read in this chapter in a description which might justify the Apostle in using the language of the Psalmist, "Great bulls of

also see Rome. So he sent into Macedonia two of them 22
that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he
himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23—41. *Heathen Outbreak against St Paul and his Teaching.*

And the same time there arose no small stir about *that* way. 23
For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made 24

Bashan close me in on every side." Perhaps such a thought was in his mind when he wrote of "fighting with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. xv. 32).

saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome] Of the long cherished desire which he had to visit the Imperial City, the Apostle speaks Rom. i. 13, in which passage he intimates that the purpose had been often entertained, but hitherto disappointed.

22. *So he sent into Macedonia*] No doubt, that the contributions of the churches might be in readiness, and that there should be no gatherings when Paul himself came, as he says to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

two of them that ministered unto him] The verb is that from which the noun "deacon" is derived, and at first the chief duties of these ministers were in regard of the alms of the churches.

Timotheus and Erastus] The former had laboured in Macedonia and in Greece when St Paul was there before; the latter is mentioned (2 Tim. iv. 20) as having stayed at Corinth, at the later period when the second Epistle to Timothy was written. He can hardly be the same person as Erastus the chamberlain of the city of Corinth spoken of in Rom. xvi. 23.

but he himself stayed in Asia for a season] We may perhaps infer from this that St Paul did not remain constantly at Ephesus, at all events when the congregation there became firmly established, but making that city his head-quarters, went out into other districts of the province of proconsular Asia.

23—41. HEATHEN OUTBREAK AGAINST ST PAUL AND HIS TEACHING.

23. *And the same time*] Literally, *And about that time.* There is some gain in accuracy of rendering of these connecting phrases. The literal rendering allows of the lapse of some period between the action of the converts in burning their magic books, and the uproar of the silversmiths. No doubt one movement was in part, but need not have been entirely, a consequence of the other, and the A. V. connects them more closely than is done by the original.

about that way] Render, *about* the *Way*, see above on verse 9.

24. *For a certain man.....shrines for Diana*] Better, *shrines* of *Diana.* These appear to have been little models in silver either of the temple or of the shrine in which the image was preserved. We may be quite sure that the ingenuity of Greek artists devised forms enough and sizes enough to suit all needs. Smaller specimens might be carried

silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the crafts-
25 men; whom he called together with the workmen of like oc-
cupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have
26 our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at
Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath per-

about and worn as ornaments and amulets at the same time; the larger could be kept in the houses of their possessors, and would be a sign of wealth as well as of devotion.

The Greek name rendered Diana is Artemis, but this Ephesian Artemis was totally distinct from Artemis the Greek goddess, the sister of Apollo. It is believed that the Ephesian worship was originally Asiatic, and that when the Greeks sent colonies to Asia Minor they found it already established there, and from some resemblance which they discovered in the worship they gave the Asian divinity the name of Artemis. The Ephesian Artemis was the personification of the fruitful and nurturing powers of nature, and so the image in the temple represented her with many breasts. Her whole figure is said to have been like a mummy, standing upright and tapering downwards to a point. Her crown and girdle and the pedestal on which the figure stood had engraved signs or letters, and the body was covered with figures of mystical animals. All these things would furnish abundant variety for the craft of the silversmiths.

brought no small gain unto the craftsmen] The *Rev. Ver.* renders "*no little business.*" The word no doubt means primarily "employment" by which a living is made. But we have it used twice in chap. xvi. 16, 19 of the "gain" made by the Philippian masters from the ravings of the girl who was possessed. And here too "gain" seems the better sense. It was because their gains were going that the uproar was made, and probably Demetrius himself, the most fierce of all the rioters, did none of the work, but through employing many workmen had a large share of the gains. He calls the gain a business or craft (the same word) in verse 25, that being, as has been said, the first sense of the word, but there is no need to cast aside the other sense of the word here.

25. *whom he called* [Better, **gathered**] *together with the workmen of like occupation*] His own special craft was the carving and engraving of these shrines, as we learn from the word rendered silversmith. But before the work reached that higher stage, the materials had to pass through many hands in preparation, and from the smelter of the metal up to him who added the final touches of adornment and polishing, all were concerned in the threatened loss of trade.

and said.....our wealth] He appeals to them at once because they are enriched and make gain by their craft.

26. *Moreover ye see and hear*] Better, **And** *ye*, &c. They were eye-witnesses of what had taken place in Ephesus, and the falling-off in the demand would be made known from all the country round, for the preaching and preachers spread far and wide.

suaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so *that* not only this 27
our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and

that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia] Beside Ephesus itself we have only notices through St Paul's writings of churches founded at Colossæ, Laodicæa and Hierapolis. But in the Apocalypse we find beside these, Pergamus, Smyrna, Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia, places whose position shews us that through about two-thirds of the coastline of Asia important centres of Christian life were formed before that book was written, and we cannot doubt that from St Paul and his fellow-workers the Gospel was preached in all that district. Hence the alarm of Demetrius.

this Paul] If we think of the bodily presence of St Paul which he himself always describes as insignificant, and which would be familiar to the hearers of Demetrius, we can fancy the scorn which would be thrown into the words as they fell from angry lips.

hath persuaded and turned away, &c.] From their devotion to Artemis, and so from the purchase of shrines.

27. *so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought*] This is an instance where the *Rev. Ver.*, though more literal, gains nothing in force, and loses in diction. "And not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute." The requirements of the connexion would be sufficiently met by, "and not only is this, &c."

The word for "craft" means literally our "interest," our "share" (i.e. in the profits of trade).

but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana] This was one of the wonders of the ancient world, and the glory and pride of all the Ephesians, and the recent explorations of Mr Wood (see Wood's *Ephesus*) have made us aware of the grandeur of the edifice and the consequent reason for this pride. Even the fragments of the architecture in the British Museum make it plain that the whole temple must have been a work of unsurpassed magnificence. No expense had been spared on its building, and the munificence of worshippers maintained it in full splendour. It was also used as a divinely-secured treasure-house, and those who made use of it in this way no doubt paid liberally for the protection. Tradition said, as it said of many another heathen idol, that the image in the shrine fell down from heaven. The description of this image (see ver. 24) is taken from coins which were current at the date when the Acts of the Apostles was written.

should be despised] More literally (as *Rev. Ver.*) "*be made of no account.*" As would be the case if men began to think that they were no gods which were made with hands. In his eagerness to save the trade, Demetrius forgets to put forward what the townclerk mentions afterwards (verse 35), that the image was held to have come down from heaven. He is only interested in the support of what supplied his wealth.

her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and
28 the world worshippeth. And when they heard *these sayings*,
they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana
29 of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with

and her magnificence should be destroyed] According to the best supported reading: *and* that she should even be deposed from *her magnificence*. The Greek word rendered "magnificence" is not unfrequently used to express the "majesty" of God.

whom all Asia and the world worshippeth] For wealth from the East, as well as from Greece, was bestowed on this gorgeous shrine.

28. *And when they heard these sayings*] The A.V. indicates that there is no Greek for the two last words. It is enough, with the *Rev. Ver.*, to say "this."

they were full of wrath] The verb in the original expresses that the anger *grew* as they listened. So better, filled with, as *Rev. Ver.* Demetrius had appealed to them in such wise as to excite them more by each fresh argument. Their self-interest first, and their pride and superstition afterwards.

and...Diana of the Ephesians] Here as before (ver. 24) the Greek name is Artemis.

29. *And the whole city was filled with confusion*] The oldest texts omit "whole" and add an article before "confusion." It is the special tumult which is meant. The city was not so much interested in the gains of the silversmiths, but equally with them in the glory and magnificence which Ephesus had, as the seat of the worship of Artemis. So that the noise, that began in the meeting which Demetrius had gathered, was taken up by the whole Ephesian population, and they needed a wider space for the crowds now pouring together from every side. The word for "confusion" intimates that the throng gathered in great excitement.

and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel] These men must have been seized by the crowd because they were not able to find Paul. We may see therefore that between the meeting of the craftsmen and the greater assembly in the theatre, there had been search made by the mob that they might lay hands on the Apostle. It is interesting to note that the companionship of these Macedonian converts gives evidence of the permanent effect of the labours of St Paul in that country on his previous journey. The brevity of the record in the Acts makes it important to observe such indications wherever they are given undesignedly. This Gaius is not identical with any other of the same name met with in Acts xx. 4, and Rom. xvi. 23, 1 Cor. i. 15. Of Aristarchus we hear again in xx. 4 and xxvii. 2, for he accompanied St Paul in his voyage to Rome and is mentioned in the Epistles written at that time (Col. iv. 10; Philemon 24). As natives of Colossæ, and most probably Philemon himself, came to

one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have 30
entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.
And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent 31

Ephesus and heard the preaching of St Paul there, Aristarchus may have been personally known to those to whom the Apostle sends his greeting in the above-named letters.

they rushed with one accord into the theatre] To preserve the order of the Greek, the *Rev. Ver.* places this clause before the preceding. The A. V. is more in agreement with the genius of the English language. The theatre was the scene of all the great games and exhibitions of the city. Its ruins still remain and give evidence that when this crowd assembled there it was a building that could hold 25,000 or 30,000 people (see Wood's *Ephesus*, p. 68; Fellowes, *Asia Minor*, p. 274). As Gaius and Aristarchus were not Jews, but the former perhaps of Roman extraction, if we may judge by his name, and the latter a Greek, with rights which even the Ephesian mob would not venture to outrage, we do not read of anything more done to them, than their being dragged along with the crowd towards the place of meeting. It might be thought that they could tell how St Paul was to be found, and when they could not, they were let go.

30. *And when Paul would have entered in unto the people*] This scarcely gives the idea of St Paul's wish, which the Greek contains. Read, with *Rev. Ver.*, **was minded to enter in**. Through a strength not his own, the Apostle, feeble in frame though he seems to have been, waxed bold in danger and where an opportunity appeared to be offered of testifying unto Christ.

the disciples suffered him not] The Christian brethren, to some of whom the storm that was rising would be known much sooner than to the Apostle, had evidently conveyed him from his usual abode, and were taking care of him until the excitement was allayed. They would tell him, of course, all that they heard of what was doing, and it was on hearing this, that he wanted to go and appear before the crowd in the theatre.

31. *And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends*] The Greek is one word, literally "Asiarchs." These were officers in the various cities of proconsular Asia, who were appointed to preside over the games and religious festivals. The *Rev. Ver.* is "*And certain also of the chief officers of Asia, being his friends.*" In Ephesus, these officers would be men of some importance, for in addition to the other games over which they would preside, the whole month of May was sacred to Artemis, being called Artemision, and was given up to festivals in honour of the city's idol. We read of an Asiarch at Smyrna in the narrative of the martyrdom of Polycarp (Euseb. *H. E.* IV. 15).

It would seem, from the fact that some of these prominent officials were friends to St Paul, that though presiding over the games and festivals for the satisfaction of the populace, they had no great care for Artemis or her worship.

unto him, desiring *him* that *he* would not adventure himself
32 into the theatre. Some therefore cried one *thing*, and some
another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part
33 knew not wherefore they were come together. And they
drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him
forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and
34 would have made *his* defence unto the people. But when
they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the

sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre] The original says more than "desiring." The Greek word is of frequent occurrence in the Gospels and is generally rendered "beseech," which the *Rev. Ver.* has given here: *sent unto him and* besought *him*. The fuller rendering marks better the personal interest these officers had in the Apostle's safety, and we gather from the narrative that they knew where he was, though the mob had not found him.

32. *Some therefore*, &c.] As the craftsmen had not secured St Paul there was no central object to which attention could at once be called, and one general cry raised.

for the assembly was confused] The confusion in the city (ver. 29) had become intensified by the rush to the theatre.

and the more part, &c.] All that would be heard by many would be the shouts of the mob, from which nothing could be gathered about St Paul as the offender. Amid cries of "Artemis for ever" or "Hurrah for Demetrius," little would be learnt of how the tumult had begun.

33. *And they drew* (*Rev. Ver. brought*) *Alexander out of the multitude*] There is a various reading in the verb here; and the sense may be "And some of the multitude instructed Alexander." The verb in the *Text. Recept.* is the same which is used of the daughter of Herodias being *instructed* by her mother what she should ask. What appears to have been intended was that Alexander should explain on behalf of the Jews, that he and his fellow-Jews had no more sympathy with St Paul than the heathen multitude. It is just possible that this Alexander may be the same with him who is mentioned 2 Tim. iv. 14.

the Jews putting him forward] This appears to make it clear that he was no Christian. For the Jews could have had no interest in bringing forward anybody who would speak in defence of St Paul. But they were clearly concerned in hindering, if they could, this uproar, raised against one who to the heathen would be counted as a Jew, from developing into a general attack on their race. We see that this might be no unlikely result, for the crowd, recognising the Jewish face of the intending speaker, would not hear a word that he had to say.

And Alexander...his defence unto the people] Better, a *defence*. There was no charge against which he had to defend himself, and he need never have been heard of, had not the Jews put him forward to be the mouthpiece of their disclaimer.

34. *But when they knew that he was a Jew*] Better (with *Rev.*

space of two hours cried out, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he 35
said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from

Ver.), **perceived.** The stamp of his nationality was on his face, and no doubt on his dress also.

all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out] They now had one object against which to direct their uproar and thus became all of one cry. It is clear from this that Jews were not popular, and that as a Jew was the object at which Demetrius and the workmen were excited, the whole body of Jews might well be anxious lest an attack should be made on all the race.

Great is Diana (*Artemis*) *of the Ephesians*] The cry, first raised by the workmen, now became general, and was persisted in with all the energy of a fanatical mob.

35. *And when the townclerk*] It is not easy to find an English word which comes at all near the significance of this title. "Recorder" has been proposed, because he had charge of the city archives, and Luther calls him "chancellor." He was a most important personage, and his title is found at times on the coinage, and he gave name in some places to the year, like the Archon at Athens. Through him all public communications were made to the city, and in his name replies were given. It is this part of his duty which has led to the rendering "townclerk."

had appeased the people] Better (with the *Rev. Ver.*) **had quieted the crowd.** The appeasing was done afterwards by his speech. All that he could effect at first, was by the influence of his presence, to induce the assembled mob to mitigate their clamour and give him a hearing.

he said] Gk. *he saith.* The speech is full of ability, and shews that the man was fitted for his eminent position. It seems to shew also that the higher classes (as has been noticed in the case of the Asiarchs) were not so devoted to the service of the goddess as were the common people.

Ye men of Ephesus...is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana] The oldest MSS. omit "goddess" and only read "the great Artemis." The word rendered "worshipper" is literally "temple-sweeper." The name no doubt was first used to imply that any office in the service of so magnificent a goddess was a grand distinction; and not in Ephesus only did the worshippers of a special divinity apply this title to themselves. The Rev. Ver. gives "temple-keeper."

and of the image which fell down from Jupiter] The same was said of the Palladium of the Trojans (Verg. *Aen.* II. 183). The first clause of the speech is directed to point out how uncalled for their uproar is. There is no need for them to shout about the greatness of the Ephesian goddess. Everybody in the world is aware how devoted the city is to her worship and how glorious is her temple.

36 Jupiter? Seeing then that these *things* cannot be spoken
against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.
37 For ye have brought *hither* these men, *which are* neither
robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.
38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with
him, have a matter against any *man*, the law is open, and
39 there are deputies: let them implead one another. But if

36. *Seeing...cannot be spoken against*] Better, **gainsaid** with *Rev. Ver.* Paul had spoken, and others would speak, against the worship, nobody could gainsay the facts, they were incontrovertible.

ye ought to be quiet] The verb is the same as is used in verse 35, of his own quieting the people, which is another reason why the rendering there should be changed.

and to do nothing rashly] The last word is better taken as an adjective, "rash." The word describes the headstrong, outrageous uproar for which there was no reason, and from which no good could come, and also their conduct in seizing two persons who were not the offenders and against whom, as it appears, they could take no proceedings.

37. *For...robbers of churches*] Better, **robbers of temples** with *Rev. Ver.* As the temple at Ephesus had a great treasure-chamber, the offence might not be unknown among them. All that was placed under the guardianship of the goddess would be for the time the property of the temple, to steal which would be sacrilege.

nor yet blasphemers of your goddess] The "yet" has nothing to represent it in the original, and the oldest MSS. read "**our** *goddess*." In a popular address it is natural that such a speaker would identify himself with his fellow-citizens. We may gather from this verse that the language of St Paul and his companions had been measured when they had spoken about the special worship of Ephesus. They had inculcated the great principle that those were no gods which were made with hands and had allowed that to do its work. We find the same restraint put on himself by St Paul at Athens, though he was greatly moved to see the city wholly given to idolatry. Different conduct in either of these cities would most likely have deprived him of all chance of a hearing.

38. *Wherefore if...have a matter against any man*] i.e. have any charge which they wish to bring. For the concerns in which they are interested will be such as the legal tribunals can attend to.

the law is open] This gives the general sense. The words are in the plural number and mean either "court-*days* are appointed," i.e. there are proper times fixed when such causes can be heard; or perhaps better, because of the verb which seems to imply that the opportunity of legal action is even now open, "court-*meetings* are now going on." This the *Rev. Ver.* appears to have adopted by rendering "the courts are open."

and there are deputies] The word is the same which in xiii. 7, 8, 12 should be rendered "proconsul," and that word is rightly given here

ye inquire any *thing* concerning other *matters*, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to 40
be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no

by the *Rev. Ver.*, for Asia was a proconsular province (see on this matter Conybeare and Howson, II. 78). The difficulty in the present verse has arisen from the use of the plural number, for there was only one proconsul over a province at the same time, and there could only be one in Ephesus when the townclerk was speaking. But if we consider that he is speaking merely of the provision made by the institutions of the empire for obtaining justice in a case of wrong, we can see that his words need not occasion much trouble. "Proconsuls are (he says) an imperial institution. In every province like ours there exists such a supreme magistrate, and so there is no fear about obtaining redress for real injuries." Another explanation (due to Basnage, and alluded to in the notes of Conybeare and Howson, *u. s.*) is that after the poisoning of Silanus the proconsul, (as related Tac. *An.* XIII. 1) Celer and Ælius, who governed the province of Asia as *procurators*, might be intended by this plural title. Others have thought that there might be present in Ephesus some other proconsul from a neighbouring province, as Cilicia, Cyprus, Bithynia or elsewhere; but what was first said seems the easier explanation.

let them implead one another] *Implead* is somewhat antiquated now, and the *Rev. Ver.* substitutes *accuse*. Of course the accusations would be only from the one side, which the other would be called on to answer.

39. *But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters*] *Rev. Ver. But if ye seek anything about other matters.* The "seeking" which the townclerk means is by a legal process. If the matter were of such a character as to come before the proconsul, there he was, ready to hear the cause. It was, as we might say, "assize time." But if the question was of another kind, one for the jurisdiction of the ordinary city courts, then they could apply at the proper time and place.

it shall be determined in a lawful assembly] This conveys a wrong idea to the English reader. Of course the court where the proconsul sat was a "lawful assembly," though the contrary might be inferred from A.V. The word rendered "lawful" signifies "appointed by law." The days and time of the meeting of the city courts were defined by law. Thus the *Rev. Ver.* "*it shall be settled in the regular assembly*" is a better rendering, and distinguishes the ordinary, legal, appointed days of hearing in the regular courts, from the assize of the proconsul.

40. *For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar.* The A. V. seems here to be incorrect. The word for "uproar" ought not to be joined with "this day." The construction is contrary to N.T. usage, and the adoption of it has caused some violence to be done to the other words. The verb rendered "called in question" is the verb used in verse 38 in the sense of "accuse," while the word for "uproar" means "riot," "sedition." So the *Rev. Ver.*

cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.
41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

1—6. *Paul journeys through Macedonia and Greece, and returns as far as Troas.*

20 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and departed for to go

gives, as an alternative version, "For indeed we are in danger to be accused of riot concerning this day." Of course the town-clerk did not want himself to call it *riot*, but he intimates to them that other people may do so. He only styles it a "*concourse*."

there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse] Here the readings of the oldest MSS. raise a considerable difficulty. Their repetition of *οὐ* after *περὶ οὗ* gives another form to the sentence altogether. But it is not possible to decide with certainty whether the two letters in question should or should not be part of the text. Westcott and Hort place them in their text, but do not think that thus the reading is correct. The rendering of the Received Text is that of the A.V. The text with the additional *οὐ* is translated in the *Rev. Ver.* "**there being no cause** for it: **and as touching it we shall not be able** *to give account of this concourse.*"

But the alternative rendering of the *Rev. Ver.* given above for the first clause of the verse may be taken, with the rendering of the *Text. Recept.* in the second clause. The *Rev. Ver.* adheres to "this day's riot," but this involves a transposition of the preposition in the Greek, of which no other example is found in the N.T.

41. *And.....assembly*] This he could do in his official capacity. Probably the last argument which he used would have most weight with his audience. If such riotous conduct were reported at Rome it might lead to a curtailment of the privileges of their city.

XX. 1—6. Paul journeys through Macedonia and Greece, and returns as far as Troas.

1. *And after the uproar was ceased*] Some little time may have elapsed and public feeling have become calm enough for a meeting of the Christian congregation.

Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them] The oldest authorities read "*Paul* **having sent for** *the disciples*," and then add "*and exhorted them*" (adopted by *R. V.*). The word rendered "embraced" signifies as it is rendered in xxi. 6, "to take leave of," "to make parting greetings." He did not probably feel that it would be wise to leave till he saw the Church in quiet once more.

and departed for to go into Macedonia] In fulfilment of the purpose mentioned in xix. 21. We see from 2 Cor. ii. 13 that he went first to Troas expecting to meet Titus there. He did not find him till he reached Macedonia, from which country he wrote the second letter to Corinth.

into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those 2
parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into
Greece, and *there* abode three months: and when the Jews 3

2. *And when he had gone over those parts*] Visiting specially, of course, the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica and Berœa, among which St Luke may have been left from the former visit, and have laboured to carry on the work which St Paul had begun. Some have judged this to be very probable, and that in this Macedonian residence St Luke's Gospel may have been written. It was also, as it seems, at this time that St Paul made the journey into Illyricum alluded to in Rom. xv. 19.

and had given them much exhortation] We may form some idea of the topics which would be embraced by such exhortation, if we read the two Epistles to the Thessalonians which had been written to that Church since St Paul's former visit to Macedonia. The most marked language in the first Epistle is against sorrowing immoderately for the dead. By the words of St Paul on this subject the Christian congregation had been much troubled concerning the nearness of the coming of the Son of Man, and the second letter is written to bring them to a calm and thoughtful mind. The Apostle's much exhortation would be an echo of what he had said in his letters, "Watch and be sober," "Abstain from every form of evil," "Be at peace among yourselves."

he came into Greece] There is nothing said of the places which St Paul visited in this journey, but as he was always anxious to strengthen any work which he had before begun we may feel sure that Athens and Corinth, on this account, as well as for their importance as centres of intellectual and commercial life, were the places in which he spent the greater part of his three months' stay. In the latter Church especially there were many things to be set in order. He had already written to the Corinthians his two Epistles. In the first, sent from Ephesus, he had found it necessary to rebuke them for the party-spirit in the Church, some calling themselves by the name of Peter, some of Apollos and some of Paul himself, instead of finding true unity in Christ; he had also censured the disorders in the Eucharistic feast, had given his judgment on a notorious offender, and on many topics raised by the difficulties of a Christian Church rising up amid heathen surroundings. These matters, and the guidance into a right channel of the exercise of those special gifts of preaching and speaking with tongues with which God endowed the Church in Corinth, would give the Apostle little rest during his brief stay even if he bestowed his whole time on Corinth alone.

3. *and there abode three months*] More literally, with *Rev. Ver.*, "*and when he had spent three months there,*" connecting it, as the Greek does, with what follows.

and when the Jews laid wait for him] The English of the A.V. defines too precisely the form of the danger. Read "*And when a plot was laid against him by the Jews.*" The Jews, who had tried to engage Gallio in their matters on St Paul's last visit to Corinth, now

laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he 4 purposed to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of

take a secret instead of a public means of wreaking their vengeance on him. And we may judge that St Paul anticipated some trouble from the Judaizing party at Corinth by the tone of the latter portion (after chap. ix.) of his second Epistle written to them while he was on his way, but detained in Macedonia. There were persons in Corinth who spoke slightingly of the Apostle. His bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible. And in opposition to the remarks of these opponents, the Epistle concludes with an assertion of St Paul's equality to the chiefest Apostles, a recital more full than in any other place of his sufferings for the Gospel, and an account of revelations divinely made unto him. It is clear therefore that among those who would be counted as Christians St Paul was not everywhere accepted. The Jews under such circumstances would have some abettors in their animosity even among the Judæo-Christians, and seem to have planned some means whereby St Paul might be attacked on his sea-voyage to Syria. No doubt the intention was to kill him. The word in the original is that used (ix. 24) when the Jews watched the gates of Damascus night and day to kill him.

as he was about to sail into Syria] The rendering of the *Rev. Ver.* gives the sense more vividly "**as he was about to set sail for Syria.**" He had apparently gone so far as to arrange for his passage and go on board, and was nearly departed, before he got the warning news. Perhaps some heart, among the people to whom the plot was known on shore, was moved to give a hint of the great peril at the last moment. This is the more probable if we suppose some previous communications between the Jews and the Judaizers among the Christians.

he purposed to return through Macedonia] Better, **he determined,** with *Rev. Ver.* As the scheme for killing him had been meant to be carried out at sea, the choice of an overland journey and a prompt departure made the forming of a new plan impossible to the conspirators.

4. *And there accompanied him into Asia*] The literal rendering of the last words is "as far as Asia," but they are altogether omitted by the oldest MSS. We find Trophimus went to Jerusalem (xxi. 29) and that Aristarchus was with St Paul in the voyage to Rome (xxvii. 2).

Sopater of Berea] The oldest MSS. add **the son of Pyrrhus.** A various reading here has *Sosipater*, a name which is found in Rom. xvi. 21, but there is no reason for connecting the two persons. We know nothing of Sopater beyond the mention of him in this verse.

and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus] Aristarchus has been before mentioned (xix. 29), and in the Epistles written during the Roman imprisonment, to Philemon (24) he is one of those who sends

Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas. 5
And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of un- 6
leavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

greeting, and also to the Colossians (iv. 10) in which place the Apostle calls him his fellow-prisoner, shewing that he shared in a great degree the whole hardships of St Paul's life at Rome. Secundus is only mentioned here.

and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus] As Timotheus was probably of Lystra, these men may have been friends from an early period and the former may have been a convert at the same time as the latter. We only know of him from this verse, and he has no connexion with any other Gaius named in the New Testament.

and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus] Of the former of these we have mention several times. In Eph. vi. 21, he is called a beloved brother and faithful minister, and St Paul states that he is about to send him to Ephesus. To the Colossians (iv. 7) he writes, "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you." From both which notices we see that Tychicus was with St Paul in his first Roman imprisonment. He was also at hand when the Apostle wrote to Titus (Tit. iii. 12), and also had been with St Paul in the later imprisonment, when the second Epistle to Timothy was written (iv. 12) and had again been sent to Ephesus. Perhaps Tychicus like Trophimus was by birth an Ephesian. Trophimus also continued much with St Paul, for we read (2 Tim. iv. 20) that the Apostle at that time had left him detained by sickness at Miletus.

5. *These going before tarried for us at Troas*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), **But these had gone before and were waiting for us**, &c. What the writer wants to point out is that these men before-mentioned did not stop like St Paul at Philippi, nor indeed tarry at all in Macedonia. As in this verse the change of pronoun indicates that the writer of the narrative again becomes a fellow-traveller with St Paul, we may presume, as has before been said, that he had been left here by the Apostle, who now separated himself for a brief time from his companions that he might pick up St Luke.

6. *And we...unleavened bread*] St Paul seems to have stayed in Philippi because of the Jewish feast. As there could be no sacrifice of the Passover out of Jerusalem, the Apostle would feel no difficulty about remaining at any other form of the feast, and we know how loath he was to sever himself from his people in all things which he might lawfully share with them.

and came unto them...seven days] Troas could not be without much interest both to St Paul and Luke and Timothy, for at least these three had been here together, on that former visit when they were called over to Macedonia by a vision. Aristarchus and Secundus represented in part the fruits which God had granted to their work.

7—12. *Paul preaches at Troas. Eutychus is restored to life.*

7 And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples
came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them,
ready to depart on the morrow; and continued *his* speech
8 until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper
9 chamber, where they were gathered together. And there
sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus,

7—12. PAUL PREACHES AT TROAS. EUTYCHUS IS RESTORED TO LIFE.

7. *And upon the first day of the week*] Which had now, in memory of the Resurrection, begun to be observed as a holy day by Christians. In an Epistle written before this visit to Troas (1 Cor. xvi. 2) the day is appointed by St Paul as the special time when the Christian alms should be laid aside.

when the disciples came together to break bread] The oldest authorities give (and the *Rev. Ver.* represents) "*when* we *were gathered together*," &c. We can see how the alteration has been introduced by some one who felt the awkwardness of the following "*them*." Wherever a congregation was organized the natural service of the Christian worshippers was the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

Paul preached unto them] Except here and in verse 9 the verb is nowhere else rendered "preach." Better, "**discoursed with** *them*." The meeting was one where reasoning and conversation were used to solve doubts and clear away difficulties which might be in the minds of the Christians at Troas. For we can perceive that there was a Church established here. Indeed wherever St Paul came he was enabled to leave that mark of his visit behind him. It is true the meeting was only still in an upper chamber, but the "many lights" shews that it was not a mere gathering of one or two with the Apostle and his friends, but a settled Christian congregation.

ready [intending] *to depart on the morrow*] They had met first for an evening service, but the consolation of Christian intercourse and the additional zeal infused into the church by the Apostle's visit caused the irregular conversational meeting to be protracted beyond the intended time.

and continued his speech until midnight] The "prolonged" of the *Rev. Ver.* is no improvement. It rather gives the impression that the Apostle had worn out all his hearers.

8. *And there were*, &c.] Our thoughts go back to the upper room in Jerusalem where (Acts i. 13) the first preachers of Christianity waited for the promised gift of the Holy Ghost.

9. *And there sat in a* [better, **the**] *window*] The window in that climate was only an opening in the wall, and not as in our country provided with a framework, the bars of which would have prevented the accident which is here described.

a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep] The last verb signifies *borne down*, *overpowered*, and the *Rev. Ver.* gives

being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went 10
down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore 11
was come up *again*, and had broken bread, and eaten, and

"borne down with deep sleep." He was not a careless hearer, but sleep at the late hour overcame his youthful frame and he could resist it no longer.

and as Paul was long preaching] Better, "*and as Paul discoursed yet longer*" with *Rev. Ver.* The comparative degree refers to the expectation or the wearied powers of the young man. The discourse went on longer than he thought it would, or than he could keep awake.

he sunk down with sleep] The verb is the same as before. Read "*being borne down by his sleep*," as the word is a participle.

and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead] To join on with the participial sentence preceding, render *he fell down from the third story and*, &c. The latticework with which such windows were closed in the East would be set wide open to admit the cool air into the crowded room. The lad fell out, and down to the floor of the courtyard. There has been much debate whether the restoration of Eutychus was meant to be described as miraculous; whether, that is, "dead" may not be taken for "in a swoon like death." But St Luke's expression (ver. 12) "They brought him alive" seems to leave no room for question. That life was gone by reason of the fall and was restored by the prayer of the Apostle is the natural reading of the story, which has all the vividness that marks the narrative of an eyewitness.

10. *And Paul...fell on him*] The access to Eastern houses was by a staircase on the outside, so that the way down would be at hand. The action of the Apostle recalls that of Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 21) and of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 34). No doubt the Apostle, like the Old Testament prophets, accompanied his action with a cry unto the Lord.

and embracing him said] As he clasped the child in his arms, he would feel the returning motion, and know that his prayer was heard. The boy seems to have been left to the care of some members (perhaps women) of the congregation, who tended him till the service was over.

Trouble not yourselves] The *Rev. Ver.* gives "Make ye no ado," evidently conforming to the rendering of this same Greek word in Mark v. 39, but while in English we find "this ado" and "much ado" and "no more ado," the expression "no ado" seems not to occur. The two open syllables are not agreeable, and that probably caused the combination to be avoided. What the Apostle means is, "Don't make any tumult or distress yourselves."

11. *When he therefore was come up again*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "*And when he was gone up.*" The Apostle's calmness, as well as his words, was not without effect on the congregation. He returns to the upper room, and the unfinished act of worship is completed.

talked a long while, *even* till break of day, so he departed.
12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

13—16. *Paul goes on foot to Assos, then by sea to Miletus.*

13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, mind-
14 ing himself to go afoot. And when he met with us at

and had broken bread] The best texts give "**the** *bread*," i.e. the bread of the Eucharistic service.

and eaten] i.e. partaken of the more substantial meal of the "Agapæ," which in the early church followed after the Communion.

and talked a long while] The verb implies the talking of persons one with another, the talk of friendly intercourse, as distinguished from the previous discourse on more solemn subjects of the spread of Christ's kingdom and the part each of them might take in helping it on. So the *Rev. Ver.* well, "*and* **had** *talked* **with them** *a long while*."

12. *And they brought the young man alive*] Here is a different noun, and the *Rev. Ver.* rightly gives "the lad." It would seem as though those who had had the care of him brought him, before the congregation broke up, perhaps even before the Apostle's departure, back again into the upper room.

13—16. PAUL GOES ON FOOT TO ASSOS, THEN BY SEA TO MILETUS.

13. *And we went before to ship*] The conjunction should be adversative. The writer is describing now what the rest, without St Paul, did. Read "**But we**," i.e. St Luke and some of the other companions of the Apostle, "**going before to the ship**," i.e. before St Paul's departure from the congregation and those events by which it was attended.

and sailed unto Assos] Better "set sail for Assos." The verb is only indicative of the putting-out to sea. Assos was in Mysia, on the north shore of the gulf of Adramyttium. Opposite and about seven miles out at sea lay the island of Lesbos. There was a Roman road from Troas passing through Assos. So while the ship went round the cape Lectum, the Apostle was able to come by land and be taken on board by his companions.

there intending...to go afoot] The last verb when opposed to a journey by sea, need not necessarily signify a pedestrian journey, but may mean only "by land." This (as *Rev. Ver.*) seems the better rendering here, for although the distance between Troas and Assos is only 20 miles, yet after the labours and excitement of the past night, a walk of that length would scarcely have been contemplated by the Apostle, when his companions in the ship already had the start of him. Many reasons have been suggested why St Paul separated for a few hours from his friends: that he wished for solitude: that he would not be at sea one moment before he could help it: that there was some Christian duty which he

Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. And we 15
sailed thence, and came the next *day* over against Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next *day* we came to Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would

could perform on the way: or for his health's sake. The historian, who probably knew, has not told us, and conjectures in such a case are valueless.

14. *And...Mitylene*] The voyage was a coasting voyage, the nights being each spent in some harbour. Mitylene was the capital of Lesbos, to which place they went from Assos, because probably it had a better anchorage. There could have been little time for anything on St Paul's land journey like meeting Christian friends, since the vessel left Troas in the morning, and by an indirect course came to Mitylene before nightfall.

15. *And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios*] As the word for "next" here is not the same as that so rendered in the following clause, the *Rev. Ver.* gives (with more closeness to the Greek) *And* sailing from *thence we came the* following *day*, &c. The island of Chios is about five miles distant from the mainland. It was in the shelter of the roadstead that the Apostle and his companions passed the night in their vessel.

and the next day we arrived [touched] *at Samos*] The verb is a technical seafaring word, which the *Rev. Ver.* has thus represented. The island of Samos lies off that part of the coast of Asia Minor where the ancient Ionia joined on to Caria. It has been famous both in ancient Greek and modern European history (see *Dict. of Greek and Roman Geogr.* s.v.). On the mainland opposite, at the termination of the ridge of Mycale, lay Trogyllium, for which the Apostle's vessel made without stopping in Samos.

and tarried at Trogyllium] The oldest MSS. omit these words. How they came into the text, if they be an addition, is not easy to explain. As the previous verb only implies the "touching" at Samos, some early marginal annotator knowing the country may have thus suggested the night's halting-place, which the historian did not mention.

and the next day we came to Miletus] Here is yet another Greek phrase for "next day." The A.V., which often gives a varied English for the same Greek, has here for varying Greek given the same English three times over. The *Rev. Ver.* has "the day after," and thus marks the variation in the original. Miletus had been a most famous sea-port in the earlier Greek history, but in the days of St Paul its fame was eclipsed by Ephesus. It lay on the coast of Caria, some 20 or 30 miles distant by land southward from the city of Ephesus, and one day's sail from Trogyllium. The site of the town is now some distance from the sea, and was not close to it in the Apostle's time, as we shall see below (verse 38).

16. *For Paul*, &c.] In the midst of a large Christian congregation, such as we know to have existed in Ephesus, there would have arisen

not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

17—38. *Paul sends for the Elders from Ephesus, gives them his parting Charge and leaves Miletus.*

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the
18 elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

many causes of delay which the Apostle in this rapid journey desired to avoid. Perhaps too there might have been some hostility roused against him, and either from a wish not to awaken this or from fear lest the allaying of it should consume time he resolved to send for the heads of the church to confer with him at Miletus.

because he would not spend the time in Asia] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), that he might not have to *spend time in Asia*. He felt that he could not go to Ephesus and leave again in a day.

for he hasted] Better, was hastening. The verb expresses the whole character of his journey, and we can only conclude that there was some difficulty in finding a vessel at Troas, or he would not have stayed there so long as he did and not have given a day to Ephesus, which he felt he was hardly likely to see again.

if...Pentecost] Pentecost at Jerusalem must have been a high Christian as well as a Jewish festival. There would be at such a time an opportunity for the Apostle to meet the more prominent members of the Christian body, and, while bringing his contributions from the churches which he had founded, to gladden them with the news of what God had enabled him to do.

17—38. Paul sends for the Elders from Ephesus, gives them his parting Charge and leaves Miletus.

17. *And...Ephesus*] At Miletus the Apostle and his party must have tarried more than one day. It would take quite that time to send his messenger and summon those whom he wished to see. If they came to him on the next day, that would be consumed in their conference and leavetaking, and the voyage could hardly be begun again till the third day at the earliest.

and...elders of the church] To express the force of the preposition in the compound verb the *Rev. Ver.* gives "*called* to him." For "elders" the Gk. word is *presbuteroi*, and might be rendered "presbyters." These men are called (ver. 28) *episcopoi*, i.e. "bishops" or "overseers." It is well established that the titles "presbyter" and "bishop" were in the early days of the church synonymous.

18. *And...he said unto them*] This is the only speech recorded in the Acts of the Apostles which we can be sure that the writer heard St Paul make. This is probably the reason why we have it somewhat in detail, and why it is so marked, as we shall see it is, with expressions that are to be found in the Apostle's letters. While giving other

Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving 19
the Lord with all humility of mind, and *with* many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the

speeches in abstract St Luke employs his own diction or that of some who were his authorities.

Ye know] The pronoun is emphatically expressed, and for this reason the *Rev. Ver.* says, "*Ye* **yourselves** *know.*" Had St Luke been giving the speech in substance, his Greek training would have made him commence, as he so often does, "Men *and* brethren." That he has not done so in the speech which he gathered from St Paul's own lips is an evidence of a faithful reporter.

from the first day that I came into Asia] The *Rev. Ver.* brings out the force of the Greek verb "*I set foot in.*" The Apostle is appealing not only to what he had done in Ephesus itself, but to what they had heard of his labours elsewhere in Asia. Ephesus was no doubt the greatest centre of Christian life in Proconsular Asia, and all that was done elsewhere would be reported there, and the lesser churches would seek for intercommunion with a church in which they could learn so much of what St Paul had taught.

after what manner I have been with you at all seasons] The A.V. neither represents duly the last noun, which is singular, nor the tense of the verb. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) *I was with you all the time.* The Apostle is appealing to his behaviour from first to last during his residence in Asia. It is not that he had been with them at all seasons which he desires to note, but *how* he had borne himself while he was among them.

19. *serving...humility of mind*] The *Rev. Ver.* here has "lowliness of mind," as the word is rendered Phil. ii. 3, but the version is not consistent, for the same rendering is not kept (Col. iii. 12) where it might just as well have been. Probably the translators of 1611 did not like the collocation *all lowliness.* St Paul is careful to point out that the service in which he spent himself was done unto the Lord as His Apostle.

and with many tears] The oldest authorities omit "many.' The adjective is a comment from the statement in verse 31. In 2 Cor. ii. 4 St Paul says "I wrote unto you with *many* tears."

and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews] The old sense of "temptation" is lost. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "*and* **with trials**...*by the* **plots** *of the Jews.* We could only see in the account of the tumult at Ephesus that there were some indications that the Jewish population were anxious to make it plain that they had no sympathy with the Apostle who was so obnoxious to the Gentiles. Here we have an express declaration made before those who knew all the circumstances that plots had been laid against Paul's life by the Jews. It did not fall in with St Luke's purpose to tell us of them, but he manifestly knew about them, for he feels no difficulty

20 Jews: *and* how I kept back nothing that was profitable
unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you
21 publickly, and from house to house, testifying both to the
Jews, and *also* to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and
22 faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I go

in recording the Apostle's own mention of them here, nor has he a thought that his narrative will be held for other than true, though men may point out here an allusion to events of which he had made no mention before. We cannot too often bear in mind that the book is not meant for a history of either one or other Apostle, but a record of how the course of the Gospel was guided according to Christ's injunction, "beginning at Jerusalem" and ending when an Apostle had proclaimed Christ in the Imperial capital.

20. *and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you*] The *Rev. Ver.* makes of these clauses, in which there is nothing for "and" or "but," only one, rendering "**How that I shrank not from declaring unto** *you anything that was profitable*." The form of the sentence corresponds with verse 27 below. The word "how" takes up the "after what manner" of verse 18. The first verb implies the wrapping up of something to keep it out of sight, or out of the way, and is used of "furling" sails. Hence the metaphorical sense of "wrapping up" or "cloaking" what ought to be spoken out. The Apostle declares that he had never from any fear or under any circumstances done this. What he means by "that which was profitable," we may learn from his own expression (1 Cor. x. 33) "the profit of many, *that they may be saved*." This would call for rebuke as well as encouragement, and would not always be a congenial work, however necessary.

and have taught you publickly, and from house to house] To connect with what has gone before, read "*and teaching you*, &c." Here we are afforded another glimpse into the zealous character of St Paul's work. It was not only in the school of Tyrannus that he waited for and taught those who came to hear, but he also went about among the people, seeking to impress any who would listen.

21. *testifying, &c....to the Greeks*] The *Rev. Ver.* omits "the" before both nouns, the Greek having no article. "*Both to Jews and to Greeks*." By "testifying" is meant "proclaiming the need of." And this message the Apostle would support by his own witness.

repentance...Christ] By some MSS. the last word is omitted. Some have seen in these two clauses a reference to the character of the preaching, "repentance" indicating what was most needful for the Gentiles, and "faith toward our Lord" the demand made upon the Jews. This however seems fanciful, especially when we remember the Pentecostal sermon of St Peter (Acts ii. 38) which was certainly addressed to Jews rather than Gentiles, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you."

22. *And now...Jerusalem*] The Apostle refers to his own spirit,

bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the *things* that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost wit- 23
nesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these *things* move me, neither count I 24
my life dear unto myself, so that *I* might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the

the constraint which in his own mind was laid upon him. Some therefore to make this plain would render "in *my* spirit." The verb implies that he felt there was no freeing himself from the impulse to go, but it has no such sense as that he already regards himself as a prisoner, that he will be seized and deprived of his liberty when he arrives at Jerusalem.

not knowing...there] This shews that the Holy Ghost had not given to the Apostle more than a general sense that in all places he would be called on to suffer for Christ.

23. *save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city*] The oldest MSS. add "unto me." *Rev. Ver.* "testifieth unto me." The Holy Ghost had called him to the work (xiii. 2) and moved the disciples (xxi. 4) and Agabus (xxi. 11) to warn him of the sufferings which were at hand. We may suppose too that such warnings came more frequently than St Luke has recorded them.

saying...abide me] The two nouns are combined in Phil. i. 16, "supposing to add affliction to my bonds," where the sense is, as most likely here, mental grief in addition to bodily constraint. Such "afflictions" were harder to bear than the "bonds."

24. *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself*] The oldest MSS. omit the words for "neither count I," and following these the *Rev. Ver.* has translated, "*but I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself.*" The feebleness and tautology of this sentence are enough to condemn it, and the "as" is a mere substitute for the "neither" of the A. V., which it quite implies. In a very clear paper on the verse Dr Field has shewn that there is probably some omission before "dear unto myself" of the same character, though not exactly the same, as what is supplied in the A. V., and that the reading of ℵ, B, and C, which the *Rev. Ver.* has tried to give in English, arose after the words, of which he suggests the loss, had fallen away from some very early exemplar. The literal English of Dr Field's suggestion would be "Neither make I account of anything, nor think my life dear unto myself."

so that I might finish my course with joy] Better, "may accomplish." The figure of the Christian life as a race is common enough in St Paul's language (cp. xiii. 25). The Apostle signifies by his words that the race will last as long as life lasts, and that he must not faint in the middle, whatever suffering may be in store. The "joy" would arise from the sense of duty done, or, at all events, striven to be done.

and the ministry, which I have received, &c.] Better to omit the "have" with *Rev. Ver.* The Apostle refers to the commission which

25 Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And
now behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone
preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.
26 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure
27 from the blood of all *men*. For I have not shunned to

he received at his conversion. The work and the sufferings are both foretold to Ananias from the first (Acts ix. 15, 16), and St Paul speaks of this ministry or service by the same word (1 Tim. i. 12), "I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his *service*."

to testify...God] To bear witness to men of the good news that God is willing to be gracious. In the context of the passage just quoted (1 Tim. i. 14) St Paul shews how fit a person he was to bear such testimony. He had been a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious, but had obtained mercy...and the *grace* of our Lord Jesus Christ *abounded exceedingly*.

25. *And...ye all*] We cannot be sure that the Apostle never again came to Ephesus. For we learn from Philemon 22 that, toward the close of his imprisonment at Rome, he had hopes and the intention of visiting Philemon, who was at Colossæ, and we can hardly think that if he went to Colossæ he would fail on the way to stay at Ephesus. Some have therefore been inclined to lay a great stress on the word "all" in this clause, as though the Apostle only meant that they were sure some of them to be dead before he paid their city another visit. It seems better to take the words as the conviction of the Apostle's mind at the moment. He was impressed with the belief that he would never come back. We have seen, however, just above that the Spirit did not give him definite knowledge of what would befall him in every place. And the sense that he was to be seized and imprisoned might make him sufficiently alive to the chances of his martyrdom for Christ to warrant the words which he here uses.

among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God] The oldest MSS. omit "of God." The verb is more fully rendered by the *Rev. Ver.* "**I went about.**" Though speaking to the Ephesians only the memory of the Apostle recalls those missionary visits throughout Proconsular Asia which we may feel sure that he made during his "three years' residence at Ephesus." For the use of "kingdom" alone= kingdom of God, cp. Matth. iv. 23; ix. 35, &c.

26. *Wherefore I take you to record this day*] The *Rev. Ver.*, to explain the older English, gives "I testify unto you." The sense seems a little more than this. The Apostle not only gives his own testimony, but challenges them to confirm or refute it.

that...all men] St Paul looks upon himself as one like the watchmen of the house of Israel (Ezek. xxxiii. 8) to each of whom God says, if he warn not the wicked from his way, "his blood will I require at thine hand."

declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed there- 28
fore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of

27. *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*] The *Rev. Ver.* as in ver. 20, "*For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole*, &c." The "counsel of God" means the whole plan of salvation; what God offers and what he asks of men. This includes the "repentance and faith" as well as the "grace and mercy."

28. *Take heed therefore unto yourselves*] The best MSS. omit "therefore." The Apostle now resigns into their hands a charge which before had been his own, and the form of his language would remind them that the discharge of their duty after his example would be the means of saving both themselves and those over whom they were placed.

and to all the flock] He commits to them, as Christ had at first to St Peter, the charge to feed both lambs and sheep, in the name, and with the word, of the "good Shepherd" himself.

over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers] These men who are called "elders," i.e. "presbyters" before (ver. 17) he now calls "overseers," i.e. "bishops," (see note there). The *Rev. Ver.* gives "In *the which*, &c.....**bishops**." We have no information how these "elders" had been chosen or appointed, but we can see from this verse that there had been some solemn setting apart of the men for their office. The Church, as in xiii. 2, had recognised some indication that they were to be placed over the church. By reminding them from whence their appointment came, St Paul would enforce on them the solemnity of their position. Though they be "in the flock" they are not as others, more has been given unto them, and so more will be required.

to feed the church of God] Perhaps no text in the New Testament has been more discussed than these words. "Many ancient authorities (says *Rev. Ver.* in a note,) read *the Lord*" instead of "God." The Revisers have kept "God" in the text, and that reading is accepted as of most authority by Westcott and Hort. The variation, which has much support from MSS., has been discussed and the evidence for it most fully stated by Dr Ezra Abbott, of Harvard University. The text as it stands asserts most strongly the Divinity of our Blessed Lord, but the form of the sentence implies, from what follows, the use of such a phrase as "the blood of God" which is not like the New Testament mode of expression, though it is found in the Epp. of Ignatius, who perhaps derived it from this passage. Because in other places where "the Church of God" is used "God" cannot be taken, as it must here, to mean Christ, some have given a strong force to the word *own*, which follows, and have explained "His own blood," i.e. "the blood of His own Son." And as the Greek text, which has been accepted, as of most authority, by Westcott and Hort, reads *αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου*, it has been suggested that after this peculiar collocation of words, *υἱου* has fallen away in very early times. This would make all easy, rendering "with the blood of his own Son." But there is no evidence that the word "Son" was ever there, and though the death of Christ is in Scripture spoken of as

29 God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves
30 enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse *things*, to draw

something "given up" by the Father "for us all" (Rom. viii. 32), yet the price paid and the purchase made are as definitely (1 Cor. vii. 22, 23) referred to Christ. The direct assertion of Christ's Godhead has been the occasion of the questioning of this text, and may in early times have led to the various readings. That doctrine does not stand or fall by this verse, but as the authority of MSS. is in favour of the reading "God" we gladly accept it, and feel that to the first readers the harshness of the expression "blood of God" was not much regarded, as the words are not so written, but only suggested by the close of the verse.

which he hath purchased...blood] Better, as the price was paid once for all, "*which he purchased.*" The verb implies the "making of what is bought peculiarly one's own." It is not the usual word for "buying."

29. *For I know this*] The oldest MSS. (and the *Rev. Ver.*) have only "*I know.*"

that after my departing] This noun is only used here, and most frequently in classical Greek signifies "arrival," though not always. But as the person who *departs* from one place *arrives* at another, it is only a difference of the point of view. Here there can be no doubt of its meaning. It does not refer to the Apostle's death, but his leaving Asia, with the thought that he should return no more.

shall grievous wolves...flock] The Apostle seems first to refer to false teachers who should come in from without. He must have been familiar with the dangers to which the Ephesian church was exposed, and we know from his Epistles how much harm was already inflicted on the Christian Church by the Judaizers and Gnostics. Even when writing to so undisturbed a church as that in Philippi, we find the Apostle giving warning against both kinds of error. And if we turn to those early parts of the Apocalypse in which the condition of the churches of Asia is described, we can read of a crop of errors the sowers of which St Paul may have had in his mind as he spake at Miletus. "Nicolaitans," "those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan," "those that hold the teaching of Balaam," "the woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess," all these could not have risen in a moment, but must have given indications of their existence long before they became so prominent as they were when St John wrote. He must have read the New Testament with little appreciation who speaks of the words here ascribed to St Paul as a "prophecy after the event" made by the writer of the Acts in the second century.

30. *Also of your own selves*, &c.] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "*And from among your own selves.*" This gives an idea of the greater nearness of the apostasy which the Apostle predicts. Not some who may come *of* those to whom he speaks, but even out of the present existing Christian body. We know from St Paul's own experience that he

away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, 31
that *by the space of* three years I ceased not to warn every
one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I com- 32
mend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is

had learnt how out of the professedly Christian body some would go back like Demas (2 Tim. iv. 10) through love of this world's good things, and some would err concerning the truth, like Hymenæus and Philetus, and that their word would eat like a canker, and they would overthrow the faith of some. These are the speakers of perverse things, things which should twist even the Apostle's own words into a wrong sense.

shall men arise...draw away disciples after them] Better, "**the** ***disciples,***" i.e. other members of the Christian body. It is not that these men will desire and endeavour to gain disciples, but they will do their best, after their own falling-away, to drag others likewise from the true faith. This is expressed also by the verb which implies the *tearing away* from that to which they are already attached, and this more literal translation of the verb expresses the labour and exertion which these false teachers will spend to achieve their object.

31. *Therefore watch*] The sort of watching implied is that unsleeping alertness which can never be taken by surprise.

and remember, that by the space of three years] As the verb here is a participial form the *Rev. Ver.* translates "*Wherefore watch ye, remembering*, &c.," in which there is this gain, that the watchfulness which the Apostle enjoins is thus enforced by his own example. Be ye watchful, because ye know that I was so night and day while I was among you. The "three years" may be a speaking in round numbers, yet it cannot have been far from the length of time which Paul spent at Ephesus. See notes on xix. 8, 10.

I ceased not to warn [admonish, *Rev. Ver.*] *every one night and day with tears*] We know from his appeal to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 29) and other places, how sympathetic St Paul was in all that concerned his flock. "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" And if for weakness and offences, how much more in a city like Ephesus where idolatry was rampant everywhere. We need not confine the "every one" to the presbyters, St Paul's labour was spent on the whole Ephesian Church.

32. *And now, brethren, I commend...his grace*] The oldest authorities omit "brethren." I am to leave you, but I commend you to One who will help you as He has helped me, and who will not leave you. "The word of His grace" means the gracious promises of the Gospel, such as those which Christ gave to His disciples when He foretold the mission of the Comforter (John xvii. 7—12), and which the Christian preachers might repeat as His words to the converts who believed on His name.

which, &c.] This must refer to God, and not to the intervening explanatory clause concerning the "word of God's grace." It is God who can build up His people, and give them their heavenly inheritance.

able to build *you* up, and to give you an inheritance among
33 all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no *man's*
34 silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that
these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to
35 them that were with me. I have shewed you all *things*,

and to give you an inheritance] The oldest texts give "the *inheritance*." The figure is taken from the apportionment of the promised land among the Israelites. The part of each of God's servants in the heavenly Canaan is to be regarded as definitely as were the possessions of the chosen people in the earthly Canaan.

among...sanctified] The tense is literally "that have been sanctified." But just as the Apostle uses "saints" frequently in his Epistles to mean those who have been called to be such, so here his words do not indicate that those of whom he speaks have attained the perfection of holiness. When they reach their inheritance, then they will have been perfected in Christ.

33. *I have coveted*] *Rev. Ver.* "*I coveted.*" But this seems unnecessary. The Apostle implies that the state of mind was his when he was with them and continues still.

apparel] In which Oriental wealth largely consisted. Hence Naaman brings "changes of raiment" as well as money among the rewards which he expects to give for his cure (2 Kings v. 5), and the same may be noticed in many other parts of the Scripture history. Cp. Gen. xxiv. 53; xlv. 22; 2 Kings vii. 3, &c.

34. *Yea, ye yourselves know*] The oldest texts omit "Yea." The working in company with Aquila and Priscilla, which the Apostle began in Corinth, was probably continued when they came together to Ephesus, and so the Apostle's trade and his steady pursuit of it would be well known to many of the listeners. It has been suggested that he was a partner in trade-matters with Philemon during this residence at Ephesus. Cp. Philemon 17.

that these hands have ministered] No doubt, he held them forth, and they bore marks that not only while at Ephesus, but since that time they had laboured for the means of living.

unto...them that were with me] We cannot determine under what circumstances the Apostle felt himself called upon to minister by his hand-labour to the support of his companions. We may be sure however that the necessity was there, and that St Paul, working himself, did not countenance indolence in others. And when we read of Timothy's "often infirmities" (1 Tim. v. 23) we may conjecture that there were those among the companions of St Paul who were less able to work with the hands than the Apostle himself.

35. *I have shewed you all things*] Better (as *Rev. Ver.*) "*In all things I gave you an example.*" The verb is cognate with that noun which Jesus uses (John xiii. 15), "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you."

how that so labouring *ye* ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and 36

how that so labouring] i.e. in like manner as the Apostle laboured. And the verb implies "wearying toil." He had spared for no fatigue. He speaks of this toil (2 Cor. xi. 27), "in *labour* and travail."

ye ought to support [*Rev. Ver.* "*help*"] *the weak*] By "weak" does St Paul here mean those standing in need of material or moral help? Grimm (s. v.) takes it for the poor, those who are in want from any cause, as those must have been who could not support themselves, and whose wants the Apostle supplied by his own labour. Yet this is a very rare sense, as he admits, for the verb to have, and "feebleness" of faith and trust is much the more common meaning. And that sense suits well here. If among new converts large demands should be made for the support of those who minister, they who are weak in the faith as yet, may be offended thereby, and becoming suspicious, regard the preacher's office as a source of temporal gain. An example like St Paul's would remove the scruples of such men, and when they became more grounded in the faith, these matters would trouble them no more. For the use of "weak" in the sense of moral, rather than physical, weakness, cp. Job iv. 3, 4; Is. xxxv. 3.

and to remember...Jesus] He appeals to them as though the saying was well-known, and as we notice this, we cannot but wonder at the scanty number of the words which have been handed down as "words of Jesus" beyond what we find in the Gospel. This is the only one in the New Testament, and from all the rest of the Christian literature we cannot gather more than a score of sentences beside. See Westcott, *Introd. to Study of the Gospels*, pp. 428 seqq.

how he said] The Greek has an emphatic pronoun, which is represented in the *Rev. Ver.* "*he* himself *said*."

It is....receive] In support of what has just been said about strengthening the feeble in faith, these words seem as readily applicable to that view of the Apostle's meaning, as to the sense of "poverty." What would be given in this special case, would be spiritual strength and trust; what is referred to in "receive" is the temporal support of the preacher, which St Paul refrained from claiming. We cannot doubt that he felt how much more blessed it was to win one waverer to Christ than it would have been to be spared his toils at tent-making by the contributions of his converts.

36. The kneeling posture marks the special character and solemnity of the prayer. We find the Apostle doing the same in his parting from the brethren at Tyre (xxi. 5). On the usual custom of standing in prayer, cp. Mark xi. 25 and the account of the Pharisee and publican (Luke xviii. 11—13). It has often been noticed that the historian, who gives the speech with unusual fulness, does not venture to record the prayer.

37 prayed with them all. And *they* all wept sore, and fell on
38 Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most *of all* for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

1—6. *Paul's Voyage from Miletus, and his Stay in Tyre.*

21 And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Cos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto

37. *kissed him*] The word is not the simple verb but expresses earnest, sorrowing salutations.

38. *sorrowing...the words which he spake*] More literally "the word which he had spoken" (*Rev. Ver.*).

that they should see, &c.] The word in the original is not that which the Apostle uses in verse 25, when he says he shall not come again. So the *Rev. Ver.* has well given "behold." The Greek expresses the earnest reverent gaze, with which we can fancy those who knew the Apostle and his work would look upon him. His presence filled not only the eye, but the mind, they contemplated all which the sight of him would recall.

And they accompanied him unto the ship] *Rev. Ver.* "And they brought him on his way, &c." thus making the rendering of the verb here agree with the language of xv. 3 and xxi. 5. They would not lose one look or one word before they were forced to do so. We can see from these words that the harbour was at some distance from the town of Miletus. See on verses 15 and 17.

XXI. 1—6. Paul's Voyage from Miletus, and his Stay in Tyre.

1. *And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched*] The *Rev. Ver.* has reproduced the Greek construction, but the sentence is not a happy one, nor the gain worth the sacrifice. "And when it came to pass that we were parted from them, and had set sail." It gives perhaps a little more of the sense of difficulty in tearing themselves away which is in the original, but it is not what an Englishman would say.

The vessel in which they sailed from Troas to Patara seems to have been under the Apostle's control, and they could stay wherever and as long as they pleased.

we came...Cos] The name, sometimes spelt Coos, should be written Cos. It is a small island, now called *Stanchio*, on the coast of Asia Minor, just at the entrance of the Archipelago, and in old times was famous for its wines and some light-woven fabrics. There was also in the island a temple of Aesculapius to which was attached a medical school.

and the day following unto Rhodes] In xx. 15 the A. V. gave three

Patara: and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we 2
went aboard, and set forth. Now when we had discovered 3
Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria,
and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade *her*

times over "the next day," and in each case the Greek was different, and here we have a fourth form in the original for the same sense. In one case in the former chapter the *Rev. Ver.* left "next day," and they make that change here, but as the Greek is not the same it is not easy to see why the A.V. should not be left alone.

Rhodes is the famous island at the south-west extremity of Asia Minor, off the coast of Caria and Lycia. The city of Rhodes and the island of which it is the capital were famous in the times of the Peloponnesian war. It was well supplied with timber fit for shipbuilding and hence became famous for its navy, and its position has caused the island to play a conspicuous part in European history from that time onward. It was celebrated for the great Temple of the Sun, whose worship in the island is marked by the head of Apollo on the coinage. With this worship was connected the great statue known as the Colossus, which was meant as a figure of the sun, and was one of the wonders of the world. In the Roman times many privileges were granted to Rhodes by the Roman emperors, while in mediæval history this was the last Christian city which resisted the advance of the Saracens.

Patara] This was a city on the coast of Lycia. It was devoted to the worship of Apollo, who is hence sometimes called by classical writers *Patareus*. The city was not far from the river Xanthus, and Patara was the port of the city of Xanthus. We can understand, therefore, why St Paul's voyage in the coasting vessel should end here, because at such a port he would be likely to find a larger vessel to carry him to Syria.

2. *And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia*] *Rev. Ver.* literally, "*having found* a ship *crossing*, &c." Phœnicia was the country on the coast of the Levant, north of Palestine. It contained the important cities of Tyre and Sidon.

we went aboard, and set forth] *Rev. Ver.* "*set sail.*"

3. *Now when we had discovered Cyprus*] *Rev. Ver.* "And when we had come in sight of." "Discover" has now acquired the special sense of "finding for the first time." On *Cyprus*, see notes on xiii. 4 seqq.

we...Syria] This was the general name for the whole district lying along the Mediterranean from Cilicia down to Egypt.

Tyre] One of the chief ports of Phœnicia, and a city of very great antiquity. It was built partly on the mainland and partly on an island, and is often mentioned both in Scripture and in profane literature. It is noticed as a strongly fortified city as early as Joshua xix. 29. We read of its fame in the time of Solomon in connexion with the building of the temple, and Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, was the daughter of Ethbaal, called King of the Sidonians in Scripture, but in Josephus (*Ant.* VIII. 13, 2) King of Tyre. The city was besieged by Shalmaneser and afterwards by Nebuchadnezzar, and was captured by Alexander the Great.

4 burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days:
who said to Paul through the Spirit, that *he* should not go
5 up to Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished *those*
days, we departed and went *our way;* and *they* all brought
us on our way, with wives and children, till *we were* out of

Christ went on one of his journeys from Galilee into the neighbourhood of Tyre, if not to the city itself, which was about 30 miles from Nazareth, and it must have been then in much the same condition as at this visit of St Paul.

there the ship, &c.] And so most probably the further voyage to Ptolemais was made in a different vessel, this one going no farther.

4. *And finding disciples*] Better, "*And having found the disciples*" with *Rev. Ver.* This means the members of the Christian church of Tyre, not some disciples who by chance happened to be at Tyre. That there was already a Christian congregation there is probable from the account of the spread of the Gospel given in xi. 19, and as brethren in Phœnicia are spoken of in xv. 3. If there were such anywhere in that country, they would presumably be in Tyre.

we tarried there seven days] The Apostle now finds that he can easily accomplish his journey to Jerusalem in time, and so he no longer hastens as he did when all the probable mishaps of a coasting voyage were before him.

who said to Paul through the Spirit] *Rev. Ver.* "*and these said*, &c." The Apostle himself was urged by some inward prompting to go on to Jerusalem "not knowing what might befall him." The Spirit warns these disciples of the dangers which would come upon him. We need not judge that these things are contrary one to the other. The Apostle knew that bonds and afflictions were to be his lot everywhere, and though the Spirit shewed to his friends that he would suffer, yet the impulse of the same Spirit urged him forward, because it was God's will that he should suffer thus in the cause and for the greater furtherance of the gospel.

that he should not go up to Jerusalem] The oldest texts give a reading which the *Rev. Ver.* represents "*should not set foot in*."

5. *And when we had accomplished those days*] *Rev. Ver.* very literally "*And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days*." This means, of course, the seven days mentioned above. The verb rendered "accomplished" is very unusual in this sense, though the Vulgate explains it so, and Chrysostom gave it that meaning, so we may accept it. Some, keeping to a more common use of it "to fit out," have proposed to understand the word "ship" as the object of it, and to render "when we had refitted (the ship) during those days."

we departed and went our way] Because of the word "way" coming in the next clause for different Greek, the *Rev. Ver.* has here "went on our journey."

and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children] i.e. with their wives and children, the whole Christian community escorting

the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.
And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took 6
ship; and they returned home *again*.

7—14. *Paul's Journey to Cesarea, and his Stay there.*

And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came 7
to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them
one day. And the next day we that were of Paul's company 8
departed, and came unto Cesarea: and we entered into the
house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven;

the Apostle to the shore. The existence of these families shews that "the disciples" (ver. 4) is required. They were the Church of Tyre.

and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed] To follow the reading of the oldest text, the *Rev. Ver.* joins the construction of this verse with the following, "*and kneeling down on the beach, we prayed and bade each other farewell.*" On the action cp. xx. 36.

6. The best text requires here for the last clause, "*and we went on board the ship, but they returned home again.*" There is nothing in the Greek to tell us whether the ship was the same in which they had come, or not.

7—14. PAUL'S JOURNEY TO CESAREA, AND HIS STAY THERE.

And when...Ptolemais] For "our course" *Rev. Ver.* has "the voyage" and for "came to" reads "arrived at." For the same verb in xvi. 1, "came to" is left.

Ptolemais is the name given during Macedonian and Roman rule to the city anciently called Accho (Judges i. 31), and known in modern history as *St Jean d'Acre* or often simply *Acre*. In the earliest times it was the most important town on that portion of the coast, but at the beginning of the Christian era was far surpassed by Cæsarea, which was the residence of Herod and of the Roman governor.

and saluted the brethren] There was therefore a Christian society in Ptolemais also. As the place lay on the great high-road by the coast, it was certain to be visited by some of the earliest preachers, when the disciples were dispersed from Jerusalem after the death of Stephen.

8. *And the next day*] *Rev. Ver.* "And on the morrow."

we that were of Paul's company] The Greek for the last five of these words is omitted in the best MSS. We can see at once how such a marginal comment, thought useful by the reader of an early MS., would be brought into the text without scruple by the next copyist.

unto Cesarea] Though it was possible to have made this journey by sea, the verb seems rather to leave us to infer that it was a land journey. The road between the two places was of the best.

and we entered...and abode with him] *Rev. Ver.* (as Greek) "*and entering...we abode*, &c." Philip is named next after Stephen in the

9 and abode with him. And the same *man* had four daughters,
10 virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried *there* many
days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named
11 Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's
girdle, and bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, Thus

narrative (vi. 5) of the choosing of the seven, and though no such prominent exhibition of his zeal is narrated as of Stephen, yet we are told, that he went away from Jerusalem and was the first to carry the Gospel to the Samaritans (Acts viii. 5). He also was directed by the angel of the Lord to go and baptize the Ethiopian eunuch (viii. 26—38), thus being doubly an ambassador to the Gentiles, and earning his title of "Evangelist." He preached afterwards at Ashdod, and from the chapter before us we may conclude that he had made his home at Cæsarea. Such a situation, the meeting-place of Gentiles with Jews, was the proper scene for such a missionary to labour in, and such a labourer would rejoice greatly to welcome to his house the great apostle who had gone forth once and again unto the Gentiles and with such mighty blessing on his work.

9. *And the same man...prophesy*] *Rev. Ver.* "*Now this man had*, &c." The family of the Evangelist were walking in their father's steps. These daughters, instead of resting at home, took upon them the hard duty of publishing the message of the Gospel. The English word "prophesy" has come to have, since about the beginning of the seventeenth century, only the one sense of "to predict what is yet to come." In the time of Queen Elizabeth "prophesyings" meant "preachings," and Jeremy Taylor's famous work on the "Liberty of Prophesying," was written to uphold the freedom of preaching. These women were, in their degree, Evangelists also.

10. *And as we tarried there many days*] The word rendered "many" is not the one commonly so translated. It is equal to "some" as *Rev. Ver.* in margin, and implies that the Apostle made a suitable stay, such as was seemly with a host of such a kind.

there...Agabus] Perhaps the same who (xi. 28) at Antioch foretold the coming famine. The prophets mentioned on that occasion had also come up from Jerusalem, and the name being somewhat unusual, makes the identity very probable.

11. *And when he was come...he took...and bound his own hands and feet*] The oldest MSS. have "feet and hands," and the *Rev. Ver.* adopts the Greek construction, "*And coming...and taking...he bound*, &c." His adoption of this figurative action makes it almost certain that the man was a Jew. Similar actions are common with the Old Testament prophets. Thus Isaiah (xx. 3) walks naked and barefoot. Jeremiah (xiii. 5) hides his girdle by the river Euphrates, and (xix. 10, 11) breaks the potter's vessel in the Valley of Hinnom; Ezekiel (iv. 1—3) draws on a tile a picture of the siege of Jerusalem, and (v. 1—4) cuts off his hair and burns and destroys it as God commanded. So too Zedekiah

saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that oweth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these 12
things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye 13
to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we 14
ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron (1 Kings xxii. 11). With this act of Agabus may be compared our Lord's words to St Peter (John xxi. 18).

The girdle was that band with which the loose Oriental robe was drawn together at the waist. It was of considerable size, and served the purposes of a pocket, the money being carried in it. To judge from the verb employed in describing the prophet's action, it seems that St Paul had laid aside his girdle and that it was taken up by Agabus from the place where it lay.

and said...Gentiles] That we may observe the Apostle's zeal to carry out the Lord's will, once more we are told how the Holy Ghost made known to him through others that he was about to be made a prisoner, and still we see him go forward unmoved, because though others might know that he was to suffer, and might in their affection strive to hold him back, he was convinced that such suffering was the Lord's way for him, and so he went on.

12. *we, and they of that place*] We (i. e. St Luke and the rest who were his fellow-travellers) and the Christians of Cæsarea. The act of Agabus was in all probability done with some publicity.

13. *Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?" The sentence is little more than an emphatic question, "Why do ye weep?" implying, of course, the exhortation, "Don't weep, &c." The verb for "break" is found only here in N. T., and signifies the weakening of purpose in any one. So the Apostle intimates not that they intended, as we should say "to break his heart" by adding to his sorrow, but to weaken his determination, and deter him from his journey.

for...Jesus] The pronoun "I" stands emphatically in the Greek, and shews that the Apostle had long ago counted the cost of Christ's service, and found the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory that was to be revealed.

14. *And...be done*] They gathered from the language of St Paul that he had a higher leading than theirs in what he was doing, and feeling that Christ's guidance was better than any other, they quieted their minds with the thought that the work was "for the name of the Lord Jesus," who would strengthen His servant to do His will.

15, 16. *The Journey to Jerusalem.*

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went
16 up to Jerusalem. There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought *with them* one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

15, 16. THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

15. *And after those days we took up our carriages*] *Rev. Ver.* "*our* baggage." In the English of the A.V. "carriages" were things which were carried. The word is found in this sense, 1 Sam. xvii. 22; Is. x. 28, as well as in this passage. So in Shakespeare, and cp. Earle's *Microcosmographie* (Arber), p. 41, "His thoughts are not loaden with any *carriage* besides." But the use is quite lost now. The verb indicates rather "packing up" for the purpose of removal, than "taking up" in the act of moving.

16. *There went with us also... of Cesarea*] The Greek text has a conjunction to introduce the sentence, "And *there went*, &c....from *Cæsarea*." The Evangelist had formed a Church where he had settled, and the congregation were, like their teacher, concerned at St Paul's danger, and so some went with him to Jerusalem. Perhaps the nucleus of the Church may be dated from the baptism of Cornelius, and Philip settling in Cæsarea carried on what had been begun by St Peter.

and brought with them] There is no special word in Greek for the last two English words. The original is a participle, meaning "leading." Therefore the *Rev. Ver.* renders "*bringing*," and adds "with them" in italics. But seeing that "to lead" is "to bring somebody with you," the A. V. seems justified in printing "with them" in Roman letters as being necessary to the sense and implied in the meaning of the verb.

one Mnason of Cyprus] This man belonged to Cyprus, but had now his home in Jerusalem. Just as Barnabas and his sister Mary, the mother of John Mark, who were also Cypriotes, seem to have done.

an old disciple] *Rev. Ver.* "early." He had become a Christian in the first days of the gospel preaching, in the beginning of the Church of Jerusalem.

with...lodge] At such a time this was no unnecessary precaution, for at the Feast Jerusalem was certain to be full of people, and by this arrangement made in Cæsarea, the whole party was saved the trouble of searching for a lodging when they arrived. To find a house in which the Apostle and those with him might all be received would probably have been attended with much difficulty. To be the owner of such a house Mnason must have been one of the wealthier members of the congregation. His name is Greek, and he was most likely one of the Hellenists. Or, if he were a Jew, Mnason was perhaps substituted for some Jewish name, e.g. *Manasseh*.

17—36. *Arrival at Jerusalem. Paul's Reception by the Church and by the People.*

And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren 17
received us gladly. And the *day* following Paul went in 18
with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And 19
when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what
things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.
And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said 20

17—36. ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM. PAUL'S RECEPTION BY THE CHURCH AND BY THE PEOPLE.

17. *And...gladly*] The brethren, whose joy is here spoken of, would be those Christians who first learnt of the arrival of Paul at Mnason's house. It is not the public reception which is here intended, for however welcome Paul may have been to individuals, the heads of the Church were manifestly apprehensive of trouble which might arise from his presence in Jerusalem.

18. *And the day following...James*] This was the Church's reception of the returned missionaries. Notice of their arrival would soon be given, and the authorities who were at the time resident in Jerusalem were gathered together. There was not any Apostle there or St Luke would hardly have failed to mention the fact, as he was one of those present. Paul took with him to this interview all who had shared in his labours, that their work, as well as his own might receive the recognition of the mother church of Christ. The James here mentioned is the same who appears recognised as the head of the congregation in Jerusalem (xii. 17, xv. 13). He was most probably one of our Lord's brethren. See note on xii. 17.

and...present] These men, with James, formed the government of the Church, and were the persons to whom the Apostle would naturally desire to give an account of his labours. In the proceedings which follow, the narrative does not, as in the council at Jerusalem, represent James as taking the lead, or being spokesman; he is only mentioned as the person to whom the missionaries specially went. The advice given to St Paul is couched in the plural number, as if the elders had jointly tendered it.

And...saluted them] The verb is used both of the greetings at parting and arrival, and these in the East were of a much more formal character than is common in Western countries.

he declared particularly what things] More literally (with *Rev. Ver.*), "*he rehearsed one by one the things which.*" Such a narrative must have consumed a long time, though St Luke, having previously given a sketch of what the Apostle had done, omits any speech of St Paul here.

God...by his ministry] We cannot doubt, from what remains to us of St Paul's writings, that this was the tone of all that he would say. God had been pleased to use him, and for His own glory had made St Paul's weakness effective.

20. *And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord*] The oldest

unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of
21 the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses saying that they *ought* not to circumcise *their*

MSS. read *God*. They took up the strain of thanksgiving which had run through all the Apostle's story.

and said unto him] Their anxiety makes itself apparent at once, and we come here face to face with what must have been one of the greatest difficulties for the early Christians. Before Jerusalem was destroyed there must ever have been at that centre a party zealous for the law, with whom labour among the Gentiles would find small favour.

Thou seest, brother] The verb is not the ordinary one for to see. It implies that there had been an opportunity for the Apostle to behold some Christian gathering. At this feast the Christians would have as much interest in a commemorative assembly as the Jews.

how many thousands] The Greek is "myriads," but the word is used indefinitely, like our "thousand," to signify a large number.

of Jews there are which believe] The most authoritative Greek text is rendered by the *Rev. Ver.* "*there are* among *the Jews* of them which have believed." These were persons who, as was not unnatural, accepted Christianity as the supplement of Judaism, but made no break with their old faith, of the observances of which their life-long training had made them tenacious. To such men, as Christianity rested on the Old Testament Scripture, there would seem little need to make a rent between their old life and the new.

and they are all zealous of (for) *the law*] i.e. rigorous maintainers of all the ceremonial of the Mosaic code. The word is the same as the name of the sect, Zealots.

21. *and they are informed of thee*] More clearly and in accordance with modern English, the *Rev. Ver.* "*they* have been *informed* concerning *thee*." The verb is a very significant one, from which comes our English "catechize." It implies, therefore, that the process of educating public opinion in Jerusalem about St Paul had been a diligent business. They had taught the lesson persistently till their hearers were fully trained in it. We can hence understand the great hostility which the Apostle experienced, and his strong language about these Judaizers. They must have had their partizans at work in preparation for his visit, and have poisoned men's minds against him.

that thou teachest...to forsake Moses] The calumniators made use of the Apostle's earnest words to Gentile converts, that they should not accept Judaism first as a door to Christianity, to bring a charge that, to Jews also, he spake of the law as no longer to be regarded. We can see from what we know of his words and actions how false this was, but at such a time and amid such a populace the charge would rouse great animosity, and have no chance of being refuted.

saying that they ought not to circumcise their children] More simply

children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at

(with *Rev. Ver.*), "telling them not to," &c. This had so long been the mark of the Jew, and the expression "uncircumcised" meant something so abhorrent to his mind, that we cannot wonder that this is put in the forefront of the charge. For the sense of contempt and abomination in the name, cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 26; Ezek. xxviii. 10, xxxii. 29, 30.

neither to walk after the customs] The customs being the ceremonial law of the Jews. There is quite a Jewish sound in the frequent Old Testament phrase "to walk after."

22. *What is it therefore?*] i.e. How stands the matter? An expression used as introductory to the consideration of what is best to be done.

the multitude must needs come together] The oldest texts omit all but the word here rendered "needs," giving only, "*they will certainly hear that thou art come*," for the rest of the verse. Some keeping the Greek of the *Textus Receptus*, have translated "A multitude will certainly, &c." But the reading of the oldest MSS. seems to give the most natural sense. The gathering before whom Paul had been speaking was composed of only the conspicuous members of the Christian body, to hear a report on the day after St Paul's arrival. The rest of the speech addressed to the Apostle gives no hint of a crowd to be gathered, but recommends a policy by which the Judæo-Christians might learn gradually in their own visits to the temple that the Apostle against whom they had heard such reports was there himself taking part in the observance of the Mosaic customs.

23. *Do therefore...vow on them*] They advise St Paul to take a part in the ceremonies of a Nazarite vow. He could not go through the whole course of the observance, for these men had already for some time had the vow upon them, but it was permitted among the Jews for anyone who wished, to join in the final purification ceremonies of this vow; and this was the more readily permitted, if the person wishing to take a share, only in this concluding portion, bore the charges of the person or persons to whom he joined himself. It is significant of the intense clinging to the older ceremonial in the Jewish Church that among the Christian congregation there were men found who had taken this vow upon them. If the authorities knew of St Paul's previous observance of a like vow (xviii. 18) they would have no scruple in urging him to take part in a similar service again. For an account of the Nazarite's vow, see Numbers vi. 1—21. It is not there specified how long the observance of the vow lasted, and the time may have varied in different cases, but the final ceremonies appear to have lasted seven days.

24. *them take, and purify thyself with them*] i.e. make thyself one

charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: and all may know that *those things*, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but *that* thou thyself also
25 walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such *thing*, save only that they keep them-

of their company, and observe all the ordinances, with regard to purification and keeping from what is unclean, which they observe.

and be at charges with (*better*, for) *them*] Josephus (*Antiq.* XIX. 6. 1) tells how Agrippa took upon him the expenses of many Nazarites. Cp. also *Bell. Jud.* II. 15. 1, from which passage it appears that the whole time of the Nazarite's vow there mentioned was thirty days.

that they may shave their heads] Which was done at the conclusion of the vow, and when the victims were offered, the hair was burnt in the fire which was under the sacrifice of the peace-offering. The charges which had to be borne by St Paul would be the cost of the victims and other things connected with the sacrifice.

and all may know] The oldest texts read, "*and all* shall *know*."

that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing] *Rev. Ver.* "that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee." The "are nothing" of the A. V. is an attempt to keep closer to the Greek, and means "have no foundation in fact." Cp. XXV. 11.

but that...and keepest (*Rev. Ver.* keeping) *the law*] The participial clause expresses the nature of the orderly walk. It was in the special manner which the Jews so regarded.

25. *As touching the Gentiles which believe*] The clause should commence with **But**, which is expressed in the Greek. The elders, while urging on Paul the course they have described in consideration of Jewish prejudices, are yet careful to distinguish from this the liberty of the Gentiles, and to confirm that liberty, and shew to the Apostle that they were of the same mind as when the council was held (Acts XV.), they refer now to the decisions then arrived at.

we have written] Better (with the *Rev. Ver.*), **we wrote**. This is said in reference to the time when the decrees were first published (Acts XV. 23). The verb used in that account for "write" (XV. 20) is the same which the elders employ here, and it is not the usual one, shewing that an exact reference is made to the proceedings of the former synod.

and concluded] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "**giving judgment.**" This word also refers back to XV. 19, where James then said, "My judgment is, &c." And although he is not specially named here as the speaker, there must have been one who at this time also gave utterance to the advice of the whole presbytery, and none was more likely to do so than he.

that they observe no such thing, save only] The oldest texts omit all these words, and they appear merely to be a marginal comment, echoing

selves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the 26

in part, but with a negative, the language of xv. 5, 24. They do not represent any part of the form given in that chapter of the letter of the synod.

that they keep themselves from things offered to idols...and from strangled, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.* makes both the meaning and the English clearer: "*that they* **should** *keep themselves from things* **sacrificed** *to idols...and from* **what is** *strangled*, &c." On the prohibitions and the reasons for them see notes on xv. 20.

26. *Then Paul took the men*] This consent of Paul to the advice of James and the elders has been taken by some for a contradiction of the words and character of the Apostle as represented in his own writings. But he has testified of himself (1 Cor. ix. 19—23) that for the Gospel's sake he was made all things to all men, unto the Jews becoming as a Jew that he might gain the Jews, and for the same end, to them that are without law, as himself without law. And these brethren of the Church of Jerusalem to whom St Paul joined himself were Christians, and therefore were not clinging to legal observances as of merit towards salvation, but as ordinances which were of divine origin, and which education had made them careful to observe. The same spirit had actuated the Apostle to manifest by an outward act his thankfulness for some deliverance when, on a former occasion, he took this vow on himself without the suggestion of others (xviii. 18). In the Christian services of the earliest days there was very little outlet for the expression by action of any religious emotion, and we cannot wonder that a people whose worship for a long time had been mainly in external observance should cling still to such outward acts, though they had grown to estimate them as of no saving virtue in themselves. With reference to the supposed contradiction in the two pictures of St Paul as given by St Luke and by himself, we need only compare his language about Judaizers in the Epistle to the Galatians with what he says of the preaching of the Gospel at Rome by similar adversaries, when he was writing to the Philippians, to see that the Apostle in what he said and did had ever an eye to the circumstances. To the Galatians he speaks in the strongest terms against the Judaizers because their influence was to draw away the Christians in Galatia from the simple Gospel as offered by him in Christ's name to the Gentiles, and to make them substitute for it the observance of the law of Moses as a necessary door to Christianity. He has no words strong enough to express his horror of such teachers in such a place. But the same Paul at Rome, the condition of whose people may be learnt by a perusal of the first chapter of his letter to that Church, says (Phil. i. 15—18), "Some preach Christ even of envy and strife, supposing to add affliction to my bonds. Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Assuredly there is as much of so-called contradiction between Paul as described in different places by himself, as between his own description

men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for
27 every one of them. And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in

and what St Luke has left us of his history. Contradiction it is not, but only such concession as might be expected from one strong in the faith as St Paul was when he was dealing, as he was called upon to deal, with two classes of men who could never be brought to the same standpoint. To observe the ceremonial law was not needful for the Gentiles, therefore the Apostle decried its observance and opposed those who would have enforced it. The ceremonial law was abolished for the Jew also in Christ, but it had a divine warrant for those who had been trained in it from their youth up, therefore all that the Apostle here desired was that their true value only should be set on externals. He felt that time would develop Christian worship to fill the place which the Temple Service for a long time must hold among the Christians of Jerusalem.

and the next day...temple] The regulation was that the Nazarite should avoid all persons and things that would cause ceremonial defilement, and that this might be more thoroughly accomplished the closing days of the vow appear, at this time, to have been passed within the Temple precincts. This, of course, must have been a later arrangement than any which is spoken of in the institution of the vow (Numb. vi.).

to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification] *Rev. Ver.* "declaring the fulfilment, &c." The meaning is that St Paul gave notice to the proper of the officials of the Temple that the completion of the vow would be at a certain time. It would be needful for him to do this, as otherwise they would have expected him to keep the full number of days which others observed. After his explanation that he was only a sharer for a time in the vow of his companions, it would be understood that his days of purification should terminate when theirs did.

until that an offering should be offered for every one of them] *Rev. Ver.* "Until the offering was, &c." *The* offering is better, for it means that special one which was enjoined by the law. The words are a part not of St Paul's notice to the priests, but of St Luke's history. The Apostle did these things and continued as a Nazarite till the whole ceremonial for all of them was ended.

27. *And when the seven days were almost ended*] *Rev. Ver.* "completed." This seems to have been the period devoted to the more secluded residence in the Temple.

the Jews which were of Asia] Lit. (with *Rev. Ver.*) "the Jews from Asia." So that it would seem that a portion of the visitors to Jerusalem had known the Apostle in his missionary labours, and may have come after him, in their enmity, to damage his reputation, by calumnious reports of his teaching, reports which had as much ground in truth as the story about Trophimus from which the tumult arose at this time in Jerusalem.

the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that 28
teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. (For they 29
had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian,

when...stirred up all the people, &c.] *Rev. Ver.* "multitude." These Asian Jews were coming up to the Temple for their worship, and may even have been of the company in the ship by which the Apostle and his companions came from Patara. They certainly had known, or found out, that Trophimus was an Ephesian and a Gentile. If they had seen the Apostle in familiar converse with him, this would be enough to rouse their indignation, especially as Paul and his companion would be living together in the same house and at the same board (cp. Acts xi. 3).

28. *crying...help*] The cry as if an outrage had been committed, and they, the strangers visiting Jerusalem, were the persons who could afford the best testimony to what had been done. For had they not seen and heard Paul in Ephesus and elsewhere?

This...people] They would intimate that he was bringing the whole nation into contempt. The Jews no doubt were treated with contempt among the Gentiles, and to hear that one of their own nation had helped this on would rouse them as much as anything could.

and the law, and this place] How great a change has come over the Apostle since the day when he joined with those who charged Stephen (ch. vi. 13), with speaking blasphemous words against this holy place (the Temple) and the law. Now a like multitude brings similar charges against him.

and further brought (*Rev. Ver.* "and moreover he brought") *Greeks also into the temple*] There was in the Temple a "court of the Gentiles" but the accusation against the Apostle was, that during his own sojourn in the sacred precincts he had brought his companions into places which were forbidden to them. How unscrupulous their charge was is indicated by the plural "Greeks," whereas the only person to whom such a term could be applied was Trophimus.

and hath polluted (*Rev. Ver.* "defiled") *this holy place*] They themselves as Jews were in the court allotted to their nation, and which was deemed more sacred than that of the Gentiles. The Greek word is literally "made common," and carries the thought back to St Peter's vision, where the Gentiles were figured by the beasts which the Apostle deemed "*common* or unclean" (Acts x. 14).

29. *For they had*, &c.] Hence we see that Trophimus had come with the Apostle not only "as far as Asia" (see note on xx. 4), but all the way to Jerusalem. His name bespeaks the man a Greek, and, from the anger of these Asiatic Jews, he was doubtless a convert to Christianity without having been a proselyte of Judaism. It is noticeable that so ready were these men to find a cause for attacking St Paul,

whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)
30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together:
and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and
31 forthwith the doors were shut. And as *they* went about to
kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band,
32 that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately

that they began it on a mere thought, "They supposed Paul had brought him into the temple."

30. *And...ran together*] This is a proof that what James and the elders had stated was true, the whole Jewish community had been "catechized" on the doings of St Paul among the Gentiles. The least spark set the whole train on fire.

and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple] This rendering hardly does justice to the Greek. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "*they laid hold on Paul and dragged him*," &c. Their design was probably to get him out of the Temple precincts before they proceeded to further violence. It is clear that all the ceremonies of the Apostle's vow were not yet accomplished, and had they not laid violent hands on him, he might have fled to the altar for safety. That such a murder as they contemplated was possible in Jerusalem at this period we have evidence in the case of Stephen.

and forthwith the doors were shut] We need not suppose that any of the Levites, the gatekeepers of the Temple, were of the same mind with the rioters. Their action in closing the gates was only to prevent any profanation of the building by the uproar which they saw to be beginning.

31. *And as they went about* (*Rev. Ver.* "were seeking") *to kill him*] The object of the mob was clearly, now that they had the Apostle in their power, to beat him to death in the crowd, and thus avoid a charge of murder against any individual.

tidings came unto (Better with *Rev. Ver.* up to) *the chief captain of the band*] The chief military officer of the Romans in Jerusalem was stationed in the tower of Antonia, which was situate on the N.W. of the Temple on the hill Acra. It had been built by Herod and was so close to the scene of the tumult that news would be brought at once. The military officer (probably a *tribune*) is called in the Greek, *chiliarch*, that is, officer over a thousand men. On the word "band" for a Roman cohort, or troop of soldiers, cf. x. 1. The verb "came up to" shews that the writer was familiar with the locality and had the whole scene in his mind.

that all Jerusalem was in an uproar] *Rev. Ver.* "in confusion." At the time of the feast religious party feeling would run very high, and the multitudes of strangers visiting the city would think to shew their zeal for the temple and the law by their eagerness to avenge any supposed profanation.

32. *Who immediately took soldiers and centurions*] Clearly he had charge of a considerable troop, which perhaps might just then be aug-

took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and 33
took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one *thing*, some another, among the 34
multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

mented in anticipation of any disturbance to which such a concourse, as would come together for the feast, might give rise.

and ran down unto them] *Rev. Ver.* "upon *them*." The tower was on the height above the temple, so that the verb is very correct.

and when they saw...left beating of Paul] The *Rev. Ver.* alters the last four words into "*left off beating Paul*" which gives a rhythm not so pleasant, and the older English was not misunderstood. The mob probably knew that Roman law would do justice, and that if the Apostle were found by the chief captain to have been wrongfully treated they would be brought to an account.

33. *Then...took him*] The last verb implies a formal arrest, therefore the *Rev. Ver.* rightly gives "*laid hold on him*." The chief captain did not come with a view to relieve St Paul, but to find out what was the matter, and seeing the Apostle in the hands of the mob, himself arrested him, that he might not be killed without a hearing.

and...two chains] (Cp. xii. 6.) Evidently, as appears from his language afterwards, regarding him as some desperate criminal. The chief captain would have thought little of any question about Jewish law (see xxiii. 29).

and demanded...done] The English word *demand* had in early times the sense of "ask," "inquire." Cp. *Cymbeline*, III. 6. 92, "We'll mannerly *demand* thee of thy story." But it has in modern times only the stronger meaning of imperative questioning. Therefore *Rev. Ver.* "*and* inquired." The inquiry was made of the crowd, not of the Apostle.

34. *And some cried* [*R. V.* shouted].....*another*] The verb is the same which St Luke uses for the din of the multitude which shouted against Jesus (Luke xxiii. 21), "Crucify him;" also for the adulatory shouting in honour of Herod Agrippa (Acts xii. 22). No other New Testament writer uses the word. The chief captain appears to have made an effort to learn what was laid to the charge of the Apostle.

and when.....tumult [*R. V.* uproar]. Perhaps as at Ephesus (xix. 32) a large part of the shouters hardly knew themselves for what the clamour was raised.

he...to be carried [*R. V.* brought] *into the castle*] The Greek word signifies "an encampment," but was employed to designate the barracks which the Romans had in the Tower of Antonia. The same word is rendered "army" in Heb. xi. 34.

35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was
36 borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed *after*, crying, Away with him.

37—40. *Paul asks leave to address the Crowd.*

37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst
38 thou speak Greek? Art not thou *that* Egyptian, which be-

35. *And...stairs*] This was the flight of steps leading from the Temple area up to the Tower where the soldiers were stationed. The stairs were not covered in, for St Paul is able to address the multitude while standing on them (verse 40).

so it was...for the violence of the people [*R. V.* crowd]. The crowd pressed on St Paul with all the more fury because they saw that he was now to be taken out of their hands. Hence it came to pass, that some of the soldiers were obliged, in order to keep him safe, to lift him from his feet and carry him up till he was out of reach, their comrades meanwhile keeping back the people from the foot of the stairs.

36. *For...Away with him*] The same cry which (Luke xxiii. 18) was used by the Jews before Pilate in reference to Jesus.

37—40. PAUL ASKS LEAVE TO ADDRESS THE CROWD.

37. *And as Paul was to be led into the castle*] More clearly (with *Rev. Ver.*) "*was about to be brought*, &c." This must have been when Paul with the soldiers had reached some place where he could be allowed to stand.

he said [Gk. saith]...*May I speak unto thee?*] Literally, (with *Rev. Ver.*), "*May I say something unto thee?*"

Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?] More closely, as *Rev. Ver.* "*And he said, Dost thou know Greek?*" The chief captain had evidently come down with a preconceived notion who the offender was about whom the disturbance had arisen. And from some source or other he appears to have known that the Egyptian, whom he supposed St Paul to be, could not speak Greek.

38. *Art not thou that Egyptian*] Better (as *Rev. Ver.*), "*Art thou not then the Egyptian?*" Thus we see more clearly the reason of the previous question which the chief captain had asked. The Egyptian to whom allusion is here made was a sufficiently formidable character, if we only reckon his followers at four thousand desperadoes. Josephus (*Ant.* xx. 8. 6; *Bell. J.* II. 13. 5) tells how he was one of many impostors of the time, and when Felix was governor came to Jerusalem, gave himself out as a prophet, gathered the people to the Mount of Olives in number about 30,000, telling them that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall down, and they could then march into the city. Felix

fore these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? But 39
Paul said, I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had 40

with the Roman soldiers went out against him. The impostor and a part of his adherents fled, but a very large number were killed and others taken prisoners. The narrative of Josephus does not accord with the account of St Luke, but if the former be correct, we may well suppose that the numbers and the occasion spoken of by the chief captain relate to an event anterior to that great gathering on the Mount of Olives. The fame of the impostor may have grown; indeed, must have done so before he could collect the number of adherents of which Josephus speaks.

which before these days madest an uproar] The verb, which is found besides in Acts xvii. 6; Gal. v. 12, is active and requires an object. Read "stirred up to sedition" (as *Rev. Ver.*), and make this verb, like the one which follows, relate to the incitement of the four thousand.

and...murderers] Read (with *R.V.*) "*and led out into the wilderness* the *four thousand men* of the assassins." The Gk. name is *Sicarii* (i.e. men armed with a dagger), and Josephus (*B. J.* II. 13. 3), in an account of the lawless bands which infested Judæa in these times, says (after relating how a notorious robber named Eleazar had been taken with his followers and sent in chains to Rome), "But when the country was thus cleared there sprang up another kind of plunderers in Jerusalem called Sicarii. They kill men by daylight in the midst of the city. Particularly at the feasts they mix with the crowd, carrying small daggers hid under their clothes. With these they wound their adversaries, and when they have fallen the murderers mix with the crowd and join in the outcry against the crime. Thus they passed unsuspected for a long time. One of their earliest victims was Jonathan the high priest."

39. *But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus*] The A.V. does not often follow the Greek so closely as this. And here it is better to read with the *Rev. Ver.*, "*I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia*" (see vi. 9, notes).

a citizen of no mean city] Tarsus was the metropolis of Cilicia, and a city remarkable for its culture, and the zeal of its inhabitants for philosophic studies.

and...people] An objection has been here raised that it is extremely improbable that the chief captain could have held this conversation with St Paul amid the tumult, and also that he would have granted permission to speak to a man whom he had just taken as his prisoner, and whom he afterwards arranges to examine by scourging (xxii. 24). But we have only to remember that the Apostle and his interlocutor were high up above the crowd, and so away from the noise; that the staircase crowded with soldiers, who could not rapidly be withdrawn because they were restraining the multitude, made some delay absolutely unavoidable, and

given *him* licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

1—21. *St Paul's Defence.*

22 Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I*
2 *make* now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence:

that, added to this was the surprise of the chief captain that his prisoner could speak Greek, and we have enough warrant for accepting the story as it is here told. Moreover the Greek which the Apostle used was of a very polished character, shewing the education and refinement of the speaker, and making good his claim to respect.

40. *And when he had given him licence* [leave, *R. V.*]. And as the same verb occurs in the previous verse, the *Rev. Ver.* has there "*give me leave to speak*, &c." It is fitting that in such passages the renderings should be uniform.

Paul...people] Apparently the chief captain had also been so far impressed by the conversation of his prisoner, that he allowed at least one of his hands to be released from its chain while he spake to the multitude, and this he waved to ask for silence.

And...great silence] The unusual circumstance, and the gesture which could be seen through the whole crowd, would gain an audience very readily. Beside which an Oriental mob is less persistent than those of the western world.

he spake...in the Hebrew tongue [language, *R. V.*] This alone, as soon as it was heard, would gain the speaker an audience with many. It was their own speech. For by "Hebrew" here is meant the Aramaic dialect of Palestine.

XXII. 1—21. St Paul's Defence.

1. *Men, brethren, and fathers*] The Greek is amply rendered (with *Rev. Ver.*) by "*Brethren and fathers.*" See note on i. 16.

hear ye my defence which I make now unto you] The *Rev. Ver.* substitutes *the* for *my* and puts *now* before *make*. There seems nothing gained by either change, the former of which leaves a pronoun which is in the original without anything to represent it. The A. V. does represent it, though not exactly after the manner of the Greek construction.

2. *And...Hebrew tongue*] The beckoning with the hand (xxi. 40) had procured silence enough for the Apostle's first words to be heard, and now they caught the sound of their own dialect.

they kept the more silence] The noun in the original refers not only to peace from cries and shouts, but to general quietness, such as would be produced by refraining from all movements. It expresses a very high degree of quietness. *Rev. Ver.* has "*they were the more quiet.*"

and he saith,) I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in 3
Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the
feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner
of the law of the fathers, and was zealous towards God, as
ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the 4
death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and

3. *I am verily a man which am a Jew*] The word rendered *verily* is omitted in the oldest MSS. The *Rev. Ver.* has "*I am a Jew*," and this renders the original fully enough. Cp. note on verse 1 above. These first words of the Apostle would correct many wrong impressions among the crowd, for we may be sure that many, beside the Chief Captain, had the notion that St Paul was one of those foreign desperadoes with which Judæa abounded at this time.

born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia] Better, "*born in Tarsus of Cilicia*" with the *Rev. Ver.* On Tarsus see note on vi. 9.

brought up in this city] St Paul means not that from his infancy he had lived in Jerusalem, but that, when he had reached an age fitted for it, he was sent from home to be educated under Gamaliel. The verb is used in this sense in classical Greek. On *Gamaliel*, see note on v. 34.

at the feet] (Cp. Luke x. 39.) The most usual position of teacher and pupils at the time of St Paul was that both should sit, the former on a higher level than the latter. For the evidence on this matter from the Talmud, see Taylor, *Pirke Aboth*, pp. 28, 29.

and taught [instructed] *according to the perfect* [strict] *manner of the law of the* [our] *fathers, and was* [being] *zealous*, &c.] For an account by the Apostle himself of his Jewish birth, education, and character, cf. Phil. iii. 5, 6. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and his language shews how learned he was in all that concerned his own people. He makes frequent allusions to Jewish customs, laws, and festivals, and reckons his time by the Jewish calendar. He was also a Pharisee, and none of his contemporaries surpassed him while but few equalled him in strictness of legal observance.

as ye all are] The Apostle wishes to put himself in an acceptable light before them, and for that reason explains that he was, like themselves, a zealous observer of the law.

4. *And I persecuted this way*, &c.] On "the Way" as the designation of the Christian religion, cp. note on ix. 2. We are not told of any Christians who were put to death through Saul's zealous persecution, for in the case of Stephen he was not a very active agent, but his own statement in this verse, and the stronger expression xxvi. 10, "when they were put to death I gave my voice against them," make it certain that the persecutions in which he took part were carried beyond imprisonment even to the martyrdom of the accused.

into prisons] The original has the plural "prisons," and it is probably intended to express by it, what in chap. xxvi. is given in more detail, the wide field over which Saul's zeal was exerted, "being ex-

5 women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.
6 And it came to pass that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone
7 from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul,

ceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

5. *the high priest doth bear me witness*] The Apostle refers not to the high priest at the time when he was speaking, but to him who had held that office when (ix. 1) in his earnestness against the Christians he had desired a commission from the authorities to carry his persecuting measures as far as Damascus. Josephus (*Ant.* XVIII. 5, 3) tells us that in A.D. 37 Theophilus, son of Ananus, was made high priest in the place of his brother Jonathan. The high priest to whom St Paul here alludes was one of these two brothers, for Theophilus held office till he was removed by Agrippa and his place occupied by Simon, called Kantheras (see Jos. *Ant.* XIX. 6, 2, and cp. Farrar's *St Paul*, I. 178). Ananias was high priest at the time of St Paul's arrest. See xxiii. 2.

and all the estate of the elders] Though it was now more than twenty years since St Paul's conversion, yet it was not improbable that some members of the Sanhedrin which granted him his commission were still alive, and the records of the transaction were doubtless preserved and could be appealed to.

letters unto the brethren] i.e. to the Jewish authorities in Damascus. The Jews spake of all their race as brethren from early times (cp. Deut. xviii. 15).

to bring them which were there, bound unto Jerusalem] The English of the A. V. is not free from ambiguity. The Greek is plain, and the *Rev. Ver.* gives the sense clearly "to bring them also which were there unto Jerusalem in bonds."

6. *about noon*] The time of the day at which the vision occurred is not noticed in chap. ix., but in chap. xxvi. the Apostle also mentions that it was "at mid-day," at which time the heavenly brightness must have been very overpowering to shine above the glare of an Eastern sun.

7. *and heard a voice*] As in chap. ix. 4 and 7, so here, and below in verse 9, the case of the noun is varied, so as to mark that the hearing in St Paul's case was different from the hearing of his companions. The verb can be connected with either a genitive or accusative case. In both the narratives a variation is made, and it was not without its significance (see notes on chap. ix.). St Paul heard intelligible words, the others heard a sound, but it was not speech to them. Cp. the narrative in Daniel x. 6—9.

why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, 8
Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth,
whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw 9
indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the
voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I 10
do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into
Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all *things*
which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not 11
see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them
that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ana- 12
nias, a devout man according to the law, having a good

8. *of Nazareth*] This is found only here in chap. xxii., the other two accounts omitting the words, though in some MSS., to make one story exactly like the other, they are inserted in ix. 5. Such assimilation of verses to each other is not uncommon in the Acts.

9. *and were afraid*] These words are omitted in the oldest MSS. and have been left out in the *Rev. Ver.* But they are not like anything in the other two accounts, the one of which (ix. 7) describes Saul's companions as being "speechless," the other (xxvi. 14) as "all falling to the ground." Therefore it seems best to retain them, as not being due to any annotation, or to the assimilation of one form of the story to another. The last three letters of this phrase are the same as those of the phrase preceding it, and the eye of a scribe in early times may have passed from one to the other, and thus words belonging to the earliest form of the narrative may have been omitted.

heard not the voice] i.e. the words which were spoken to Saul. They were only conscious of a sound around them. See above on verse 7.

10. *which are appointed for thee to do*] God explained this to Ananias (see ix. 15), how Saul was a chosen vessel to bear His name before Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel; and still more about his labours was to be revealed to the new Apostle himself. According to xxvi. 16—18 the character of the work to which he was called was from the first indicated to Saul; though as no mention is made of Ananias in that passage, it may well be that the Apostle there brings into one statement both the words he heard on the way, and those which were afterwards spoken to him by Ananias.

11. *could not see for the glory of that light*] This explanation of the reason of the Apostle's blindness is only given in this place.

12. *Ananias, a devout man according to the law*, &c.] The Apostle neglects nothing in his address which can conciliate his audience, and so he tells them that the messenger whom God sent to him was "well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt in Damascus." (For *Ananias* see note on ix. 10.) The hostility towards Christians, which was so strong in Jerusalem, had not at the time of St Paul's conversion manifested itself

13 report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, came unto me, and
stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight.
14 And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said,
The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that *thou* shouldest
know his will, and see *that* Just One, and shouldest hear the
15 voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all
16 men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why

so greatly in Damascus, since Ananias "a disciple" was still in good repute with the Jews there.

13. *and stood*] The fuller force of the compound verb is given by the *Rev. Ver.* "and standing by me."

receive thy sight...I looked up, &c.] The verb is the same in both places, and this the *Rev. Ver.* has noted in the margin. But the word is used in both senses elsewhere in N. T., as of Jesus (Luke xix. 5) *looking up* and seeing Zacchæus in the sycomore tree, and (John ix. 11) of the blind man who *received* his sight.

And the same hour] *Rev. Ver.* with strict grammatical warrant, "*and in that very hour*."

14. *The God of our fathers*, &c.] Ananias spake naturally as one Jew to another. At the commencement of the Christian Church there was no thought of a rupture with Judaism, and nothing is more to be noticed in the Acts than the gradual advance made by the Apostles and their companions in apprehending what the result of their mission would be.

hath chosen thee] The verb, which is found only in the Acts in the N. T., has the sense of committing a work into anyone's hands. So *Rev. Ver.* "appointed."

that thou shouldest know his will] For this reason it is that St Paul so often in the commencement of his Epistles speaks of himself as an Apostle according to the *will* of God. 1 Cor. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 1, &c. The whole passage Eph. i. 1—11 is a comment on this clause.

and see that Just One] *Rev. Ver.* "*see the righteous One*," i.e. Jesus, called "the Holy One and the Just" (Acts iii. 14) and "the Just One" (vii. 52), in both which places the *R. V.* reads "Righteous," thus connecting all the passages with 1 John ii. 1, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth] *Rev. Ver.* "*a voice from*, &c." In this way Paul was taught of Jesus as the other Apostles.

15. *For thou shalt be his witness*, &c.] Thus the commission of the later-called Apostle was in the same terms as those in which Christ had spoken (Acts i. 8) to the eleven before his Ascension.

unto all men] Paul does not utter the word "Gentiles" until he is forced to do so.

of what thou hast seen and heard] For by revelation the Apostle was made aware of the whole scope of Christian truth, and of those doctrines which Christ in His life on earth had communicated to the Twelve.

tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. And it came to pass 17
that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I
prayed in the temple, I was in a trance, and saw him say- 18

16. *why tarriest thou?*] According to the narrative in ix. 15 the message of Ananias had already proclaimed the gift of the Holy Ghost to Saul, and the favour of God had been shewn in the recovery of his sight. So the question of Ananias becomes parallel to that of St Peter in the house of Cornelius: "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

arise, and be baptized] Though the gift of the Spirit was announced, yet God directs that the means of grace, the sacrament of baptism, which the Apostle must offer to others, should also be received by himself.

and wash away thy sins] The close connexion of the sacramental sign with renewing grace is spoken of in like terms by the Apostle in his Epistle to Titus (iii. 5) "according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

calling on the name of the Lord] The oldest authorities give "calling on His name," which refers back to "the Just One." Probably the *Textus Receptus* is due to a desire to make the phrase accordant with ii. 21.

17. *when I was come again to Jerusalem*] *Rev. Ver.* "had returned." This refers to that visit of the Apostle recorded in Acts ix. 26 seqq. We learn from Gal. i. 18 that three years had elapsed between the conversion of Saul and this visit to Jerusalem, which period is supposed to have been consumed in Arabia (cp. Gal. i. 17). The preaching of Saul at Jerusalem we are told in the Acts roused the anger of the Greek-speaking Jews, and that in consequence of their attempts against Saul the Christian congregation sent him away first to Cæsarea and then to Tarsus.

even while I prayed in the temple] It is worthy of note how often in this address St Paul incidentally expresses himself in such wise as to conciliate the crowd. His visit to the temple for the purpose of prayer was at once a proof that he was not likely to despise Jewish ordinances and religious observances.

I was in a trance] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "I fell into a trance." This was the occasion of one of those "visions and revelations of the Lord" of which St Paul speaks to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xii. 1) and with which, from his conversion onwards, he was many times instructed and comforted.

18. *and saw him saying unto me*] In Acts ix. 29—30 no mention is made that a vision had appeared to Saul commanding him to depart from Jerusalem. It is only said that "the disciples" sent him away. But these two statements are not inconsistent with each other. Saul might be warned to go, and the disciples at the same time prompted to send him. In the same way two different causes, one natural, the other

ing unto me, Make haste, and get *thee* quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.
19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in
20 every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of
21 them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

supernatural, are mentioned Acts xiii. 2—4, *viz.* the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and the act of the Church of Antioch. And still more like is the statement of St Paul (Gal. ii. 2), that he went up to Jerusalem "by revelation," when it is placed side by side with Acts xv. 2 where we are told that the Christians of Antioch determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to consult the church in Jerusalem.

get thee quickly out of Jerusalem] We know from Gal. i. 18 that the duration of the Apostle's stay was but fifteen days.

receive thy testimony concerning me] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "receive of thee testimony, &c." The Apostle, as is clear from what follows in the next verse, considered that he would be specially a messenger likely to persuade and convince men of the truths of the Christian faith. God, in the vision, points out that this will not be so.

19. *Lord, they know*, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.* gives "they themselves know" to mark that the pronoun is emphatic. This is not English, but there seems to be no other way of indicating in our language the emphasis which is expressed in the original. Saul is confident that he will be well known by many to whom he is speaking, and that his zealous persecution of the Christians less than four years before cannot have fallen out of men's memories.

I imprisoned and beat] The Greek implies that this conduct was of some continuance. Saul was regularly engaged in the work.

in every synagogue] For the synagogues as places where such punishment was inflicted cp. Matth. x. 17, xxiii. 34, Mark xiii. 9, Luke xxi. 12. That they were also places in which charges were heard is seen from Luke xii. 11.

20. *thy martyr Stephen*] Better, "Stephen, thy **witness**." The Greek word had not yet come to be applied as it afterwards was to those Christians who *bore witness* to the truth by their death.

and consenting unto his death] The oldest authorities omit the last three words, which are added to bring the phrase into exact accord with viii. 1.

kept the raiment] cp. vii. 58.

21. *I will send thee far hence*, &c.] *Rev. Ver.* "will send thee forth far hence, &c." We need not understand the command as implying that the Apostle's missionary labours were to begin from that moment, but that God's work for him was now appointed, and would begin in His own time, but would be not among Jews or Greeks at Jerusalem, but among the Gentiles in distant places.

22—29. *Fury of the Jews. The Chief Captain orders Paul to be scourged, but on hearing that he is a Roman, recalls the order in alarm.*

And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lift 22
up their voices, and said, Away with such *a fellow* from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they 23
cried out, and cast *off their* clothes, and threw dust into the air, the chief captain commanded him to be brought into 24

unto the Gentiles] St Paul had kept back the word which he was sure would rouse their anger as long as ever he could, and we may well suppose from the conciliatory tone of much of his speech that the attention of the crowd had been enlisted, for the speaker was a man of culture and spake their own tongue. But when the Gentiles are spoken of as recipients of God's message they break forth into all the excitement of an Oriental mob.

22—29. FURY OF THE JEWS. THE CHIEF CAPTAIN ORDERS PAUL TO BE SCOURGED, BUT ON HEARING THAT HE IS A ROMAN, RECALLS THE ORDER IN ALARM.

22. *unto this word*] It is probable that, though listening, they were not well-pleased at some things which they heard. Their pent-up feelings broke into instant execration at the hated word.

and then lift up] The *Rev. Ver.* omits "then" for which there is no word in the original, but it is needed for the English sense, and would be therefore better retained.

for it is not fit] The best authorities read "It was not fit." And this no doubt expresses the feeling of the mob. They had listened for a time, but when the speaker made mention of "the Gentiles" they were at once clear that he ought *long ago* to have been destroyed. He had been all along a man who was not fit to live.

23. *cast off their clothes*] i. e. the loose upper robe, which could easily be laid aside, and which in such an excitement would interfere with their movements. Compare the conduct of the crowd when our Lord rode into Jerusalem, and also the behaviour of Jehu's friends, 2 Kings ix. 13.

and threw dust into the air] Compare the action of Shimei, 2 Sam. xvi. 13, where the marginal rendering shews that the dust was thrown at David. Perhaps it may have been meant in the present case to be thrown at St Paul, who was above the crowd, at the top of the stairs. The attempt to reach him with what they threw was futile, but it shewed what they would fain have done. For a like action as a sign of grief cp. Job ii. 12.

24. *the chief captain*, &c.] Probably the chief captain knew nothing of what St Paul had been saying, and would be surprised at the outbreak of rage on the part of the people, and conclude from it that there

the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against
25 him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood *by*, Is it lawful for you to scourge a
26 man *that is* a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.
27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me,
28 art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And

was some serious charge laid against him which he might best ascertain by subjecting his prisoner to torture till he should confess.

wherefore they cried so against him] The *Rev. Ver.* has "for what cause they so shouted against him," and the verb is rendered "gave a shout" (Acts xii. 22), but there it is the voice of the applauding crowd that is spoken of. In this verse and Luke xxiii. 21 (the only other passage in which the word is found in N. T.) "cry" seems to express better in English the utterance of an infuriated mob. It is true that a different verb is rendered by "cry" in verse 23, but that proves that the Greeks had two verbs which they could use for the noise of a mob, while in English we appear not to be so rich. In the A. V. "shout" seems always used of triumph and exultation.

25. *And as they bound him with thongs*] *Rev. Ver.* "And when they had tied him up with the thongs." This gives more of the force of the verb in the Greek which implies the stretching of the prisoner forward, so that he may be in a position to receive the blows. Some have translated "for the thongs," but the word rendered "thongs" is one which is always used for straps employed for straining or binding tight, and rarely, if ever, for the implement by which the chastisement is inflicted.

the centurion that stood by] He was superintending the work of fastening the prisoner to the whipping-post, which was done by the common soldiers.

a man that is a Roman] It was an offence punishable with the severest penalties for a man to claim to be a Roman citizen, if he were not one. The peril of such an assertion, if it were not true, convinces the centurion at once, and though we are not told so expressly we may feel sure that the operation of "tying up" was stopped.

26. *Take heed what thou doest*] The oldest texts omit the word for "take heed" and so make the remainder to be a blunt question "What art thou about to do?" And thus *Rev. Ver.* It was forbidden, under heavy penalty, by the *Lex Porcia*, to scourge a Roman citizen (Liv. x. 9).

28. *obtained I this freedom*] Better "*this citizenship*" (*Rev. Ver.*). Probably at the time when the A. V. was made "freedom" conveyed somewhat of this sense as we speak still of bestowing on any one the

Paul said, But I was *free* born. Then straightway they de- 29
parted from him which should have examined him: and the
chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a
Roman, and because he had bound him.

30. *The Chief Captain brings Paul before the Sanhedrin.*

On the morrow, because he would have known the cer- 30
tainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him
from *his* bands, and commanded the chief priests and all

"freedom" of a city, meaning thereby all the rights of a citizen. It was the Roman boast "I am a Roman *citizen*," (Cic. *in Verr.* v. 63). The sale of the freedom of Rome was at times the perquisite of some of the Imperial parasites and favourites, who made what they could of such a privilege.

I was free born] *Rev. Ver.* "I am a Roman born." How St Paul came to be a Roman citizen by birth we cannot tell, probably some ancestor for meritorious conduct had been rewarded with enfranchisement. Tarsus was a free city, and had its own laws and magistrates, but that did not constitute its inhabitants Roman citizens.

29. *which should have examined him*] This is old English for "which were about to examine him" which the *Rev. Ver.* gives. The verb is euphemistically employed for the scourging which it was proposed to administer to obtain information from St Paul.

because he had bound him] i.e. bound him for the purpose of scourging. To be bound with a chain as a prisoner was not prohibited in the case of Romans. Hence we find St Paul speaking often in the Epistles, written during his imprisonment at Rome, of the bonds and the "chain" with which he was afflicted. Cp. Phil. i. 7, 13, 14, 16; Col. iv. 18; Philem. 10, 13. Also Acts xxviii. 20, while the next verse in this chapter shews that though the Apostle was unloosed from the whipping-post, he was still kept in bands.

30. THE CHIEF CAPTAIN BRINGS PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.

30. *because he would have known*] Literally and better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "desiring to know." The Chief Captain was anxious as a Roman officer, that justice should be done, and this could only be by having both sides before some authoritative council.

he loosed him from his bands] The oldest MSS. do not contain the last three words, but they are to be understood, whether expressed or not.

and commanded the chief priests] He had discovered thus much that the offence charged against his prisoner was concerning the religion of the Jews. He therefore summons the chief religious authorities as those who were best able to decide whether any wrong had been done.

and all their council] The oldest text omits "their." The council intended was the whole Jewish Sanhedrin.

their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set *him* before them.

1—10. *St Paul before the Sanhedrin. Disagreement between the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

23 And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men
and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before
2 God until this day. And the high priest Ananias com-

to appear] i.e. to be assembled in some place to which he might bring Paul, and have the case fairly discussed. The place where the Sanhedrin met for their own consultations was called *Lishkath-Haggazith* and was a hall built of cut stone so situate that one half was built on holy, the other half on the profane ground, and it had two doors, one to admit to each separate section. T. B. *Yoma* 25a. But whether this was the place of meeting at this time we have no means of deciding.

brought Paul down] The castle was situate on the highest part above the temple, so that wherever he had to go, the Chief Captain must come down.

set him before them] He appears to have left him there (see xxiii. 10) and to have given him over to them for examination, though still taking care that he should not be the victim of mob-law.

XXIII. 1—10. ST PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

1. *And Paul, earnestly beholding the council*] The verb is one which St Luke very frequently employs to note a speaker's expression at the commencement of a speech, and it is one of those features in the Acts which shew us where the compiler has acted as editor to the narratives which he used. He very generally gives some word to indicate the gesture or look of the person who speaks. This verb is often rendered in A.V. "looking stedfastly" and that rendering the *Rev. Ver.* gives here.

Men and brethren] Better, "Brethren." See note on i. 16.

I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day] The pronoun "I" is emphatically inserted in the Original. It is as though the Apostle would say, 'You see me before you as though I were an offender, but personally I feel myself innocent.' The verb is one which in profane authors signifies 'to discharge the duties of a citizen.' St Paul implies by its use that he has been obedient to God's laws, as a good citizen would be to the laws of his country. So far as being devoted to God's service, his whole life up to the present moment had been of one piece, it was only that his conscience had been enlightened, and so his behaviour had changed. He had at first lived as a conscientious and observant Jew, his conscience now approved his conduct as a Christian.

2. *And the high priest Ananias*] This was Ananias the son of Nebedæus. (Joseph. *Ant.* XX. 5, 2.) In the time of the Emperor

manded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, 3
thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? 4
Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high 5

Claudius he had been suspended from his office for some offence and sent to Rome (*Ant.* xx. 6. 2) but afterwards seems to have been held in great reputation in Jerusalem (*Ant.* xx. 9. 2).

to smite him on the mouth] No doubt St Paul's address, before the high priest gave this order, had extended much beyond the single sentence which St Luke records, and he only preserves for us that which appears to have moved the anger of the authorities, by his claim to have led a life of which in God's sight he was not ashamed. The action was intended to put a stop to what would be counted the presumptuous language of St Paul.

3. *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall*] Here we may see how very far even the excellence of St Paul comes short of the behaviour of the Divine Master, who when he suffered threatened not, and when reviled, reviled not again. We need not however consider that St Paul's language here was a wish for evil upon the high priest, but only an expression of confidence in God that such conduct as that of Ananias would not be allowed to go unpunished. We know from Josephus (*Wars*, II. 17. 9) that Ananias did come to a violent end. St Paul calls him "whited wall" because he bore the semblance of a minister of justice, but was not what he seemed. Cp. "whited sepulchres" (Matth. xxiii. 27).

for sittest thou, &c.] The original has merely the copulative conjunction, which the *Rev. Ver.* consequently represents by "and *sittest thou*, &c." The translation misses the force of the Greek, which has the pronoun emphatically expressed. The connexion seems to be this. The Apostle had just named the high priest "a whited wall;" he then continues "and dost *thou* (such an one) sit, &c."

after the law] i. e. according to the law (as *Rev. Ver.*). Cp. *Pr. Bk.* "Deal not with us *after* our sins."

contrary to the law] For St Paul had not yet been heard. Cp. John vii. 51.

4. *God's high priest*] So styled because he sat on the judgment-seat as God's representative, cp. Deut. xvii. 8—13. In the Old Test. the priestly, and even other, judges are sometimes called by God's own name "Elohim." (See Exod. xxi. 6, xxii. 8, 9 and cp. Ps. lxxxii. 1.)

5. *I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest*] Several explanations have been given of this statement of St Paul. Some think that it may have been true that St Paul from defect of sight, with which he is supposed to have been afflicted, could not distinguish that the speaker was the high priest; others that the high priest was not in his official position as president of the court; or that owing to the

priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of
6 the ruler of thy people. But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the

troublous times, and St Paul's recent arrival in Jerusalem, he was not aware who was high priest; or that he was speaking in irony, and meant to imply that the action of the judge was of such a character that none would have supposed him to be high priest; or that he meant by "I wist not" that for the moment he was not thinking of what he was saying. It is most consonant with St Paul's character to believe that either his own physical deficiency, or some lack of the usual formalities or insignia, made him unable to distinguish that he who had given the order was really the high priest.

for it is written] The quotation is from Exod. xxii. 28 and is another illustration of what was said above on verse 4. The whole sentence of the O. T. is "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people" and the marginal note on "gods" is "*Or*, judges" which margin should be in the text. The *Rev. Ver.* in this verse omits "the" before "high priest" and renders "*a* ruler" instead of "*the* ruler."

6. *But when Paul perceived*, &c.] We are not told in what way the knowledge which the Apostle here acted on was gained. Perhaps the Pharisees, as in the parable of the Pharisee and publican, kept themselves apart; or to a Jewish eye some mark of their dress may have been enough to bespeak a difference of party. St Paul used this party spirit in a perfectly legitimate manner. What he did was not done merely to set them by the ears, but to secure an opportunity for speaking on that central doctrine of Christianity, the resurrection of the dead. (Cp. xxiv. 21.)

Men and brethren] Better "*Brethren.*" See note on i. 16.

the son of a Pharisee] The best MSS. give **a son of Pharisees**. This reading has the advantage of removing St Paul's language beyond the questioning which has sometimes been raised about it. "I am a Pharisee," he says. And the question has been raised, whether he had a right to describe himself thus. When he continues "a son of Pharisees" we see that he is stating that by descent and birth his family had for generations been members of that party. Having said this, he then propounds that doctrine which, of all their teaching, was that which severed them from the Sadducees. That this point also was the central doctrine of Christianity makes St Paul's address not disingenuous, but an appeal to those who agreed with him thus far in his belief, to hear what he had further to say which might meet with their acceptance. And it is not as if the Apostle had raised the question in their midst on some side-issue. The whole teaching of the Christian church rested on the truth of the resurrection, and therefore with much wisdom and without any thought of deception he cries, "I am a Pharisee, and for

dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, 7
there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees 8
say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit:
but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great 9
cry: and the scribes *that were* of the Pharisees' part arose,
and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a
spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against
God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief 10

teaching the doctrine of the resurrection (which they hold) I am now called in question.'

7. *and the multitude* [*Rev. Ver.* assembly] *was divided*] The verb in the original is that from which our English "schism" is derived, and this points to the character of the division. God made the division work for the safety of his servant, as He many times brings good out of evil.

8. *the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection*] It is said that their teaching had its rise in the thought that "God's servants should not do service with the hope of reward." As the life to come would be a reward we are told that their doctrine developed into the denial of the Resurrection. As we meet with them in the New Testament, they are mainly members of the priestly order, and appear to have accepted only the written Law, as distinct from tradition, yet in spite of the mention of angels in the Pentateuch they appear to have explained the language in such wise as to identify these angelic appearances with some manifestation of the divine glory, and thus to have come to deny the existence of any spiritual beings distinct from God Himself. In political matters they were on the side of Rome, and in consequence are found uniting at times with the Herodians.

9. *And there arose a great cry* [*Rev. Ver.* clamour] The noise was of an excited mob. It is the same word that is used in the parable of the Ten Virgins, to describe the shout "the bridegroom cometh."

and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part] The best authorities read "**some** *of the scribes of the Pharisees' part.*"

let us not fight against God] These words are not found in the oldest MSS, and it may be that St Luke left the sentence as an incomplete exclamation. This the *Rev. Ver.* has endeavoured to represent by rendering the preceding clause "And what if a Spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel." The temper of these Pharisees is so very much akin to the counsel of Gamaliel in chap. v. 39, that it is not difficult to understand how a thoughtful reader filled up on his margin the unfinished exclamation by an adaptation of Gamaliel's language, and that these words found their way in a short time into the text.

10. *the chief captain*] He must have been in some position where he could watch all the proceedings, though we can hardly think that he was presiding in the Sanhedrin.

captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring *him* into the castle.

11—25. *Paul is cheered by a Vision. The Jews conspire to kill him.*

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in
12 Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome. And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and

pulled in pieces of them] The Pharisees had constituted themselves protectors of the Apostle, and so the possession of his person had become the object of a struggle between them and their opponents.

commanded the soldiers] They were in the tower of Antonia, overlooking the Temple-precincts, and so were ready to interfere in the struggle as soon as they were bidden. They were in considerable numbers, for below (ver. 27) the A. V. renders this word by "army." Jerusalem was at this time in such an excited state that the presence of a large Roman force was necessary.

11—25. PAUL IS CHEERED BY A VISION. THE JEWS CONSPIRE TO KILL HIM.

11. *And the night following*] The Apostle was now, though not rightly a prisoner, yet kept, that he might be out of harm's way, under the charge of the Roman soldiers. The hearing of his case having been interrupted, another time was to be appointed when the examination should be completed.

the Lord stood by him] Appearing in a vision as before at Corinth, cp. xviii. 9.

Be of good cheer] The Apostle could hardly be otherwise than downcast with the events of the previous day. He had entered the Temple and undertaken the Nazarite vow with a view of conciliating the Jews and he had only been saved from being torn in pieces of them through the interference of the Roman commander.

so must thou bear witness also at Rome] He had already written to the Roman church of his "longing to see them," and that "oftentimes he had purposed to come unto them (Rom. i. 11—13)," and St Luke (Acts xix. 21) records the intention in the history of St Paul's stay at Ephesus. The way to compass such a visit had not yet been found, but now it is pointed out by the Lord Himself.

12. *And when it was day*] While Paul was receiving comfort from the Lord, the Jews were plotting to secure his destruction and they let no time be wasted. Their plans are ready by the next day, and as soon as it arrived they set about their execution.

certain of the Jews banded together] The best MSS. omit *certain of*. The addition looks like a marginal comment of some one who felt that

bound themselves under a curse, saying that *they* would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they 13
were more *than* forty which had made this conspiracy.
And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We 14
have bound ourselves under a great curse, that *we* will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now therefore ye with 15
the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he

the plot would only be contrived by the Sadducees. The men who banded themselves thus together were probably belonging to the Zealots of whose fanaticism Josephus gives several instances.

bound themselves under a curse] Lit. placed themselves under an anathema. The noun is used in very solemn language twice over by St Paul (Gal. i. 8, 9), "Let him be accursed." It was an invocation of God's vengeance upon themselves, if they failed to do the work which they undertook.

they would neither eat nor drink] So that there was no time to be lost; their work must be promptly executed.

13. *more than forty*] Shewing the excited state of popular feeling at this moment among the Jews. They may have been prompted to this method of getting rid of the Apostle, because they had not the power of life and death any longer, and were not likely to procure Paul's death at the hands of the Roman authorities, on any accusation connected with a religious question.

14. *they came to the chief priests and elders*] Who were most likely of the Sadducees' part, and who therefore would have no wish to save St Paul's life.

We have bound ourselves under a great curse] Lit. "with a curse have we cursed ourselves." A Hebrew mode of expressing the intensity and earnestness of any action. Cp. "to die the death, &c."

that we will eat nothing] More literally (with *Rev. Ver.*) "to taste nothing."

15. *Now therefore ye with the council*, &c.] *Rev. Ver.* "*do ye*," to mark more clearly the imperative. The chief priests and elders, of the Sadducees' party, were to use their influence in the council, that a request might proceed from the whole body of the Sanhedrin, that Paul should be again brought before them by the chief captain. From what we read of the Sadducees, in the N. T. and Josephus, it is easy to believe that they would be in a majority.

that he bring him down] i. e. from the tower of Antonia to the place where the Sanhedrin held its meetings.

unto you to morrow] The oldest MSS. omit the last word. It is found in verse 20 below, and may have been early inserted here to make that verbal accord of the desire for which the received text of the Acts of the Apostles furnishes so many illustrations.

16 come near, are ready to kill him. And when Paul's sister's
son heard of *their* lying in wait, he went and entered into
17 the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the
centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto
the chief captain: for he hath a certain *thing* to tell him.
18 So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and
said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed *me*

as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him] *Rev. Ver.* "as though ye would judge of his case more exactly," which is more in accordance with the classical meaning of the verb.

we...are ready to kill him] So that the suspicion of complicity in the crime would not fall upon the chief priests and elders. Their intention would appear to have been to give St Paul a fair hearing, and the murder would seem to be the work of some fanatics unconnected with the Council.

16. *And when Paul's sister's son*, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.* keeps to the Greek construction, "But Paul's sister's son heard...and he came, &c."

We have no other mention of the family of St Paul anywhere in the history. It seems improbable that the sister and her son were settled inhabitants of Jerusalem, or we should have been likely to hear of them on Paul's previous visits. His imprisonment at this time was only to keep him from being killed, and so any relative or friend was permitted to come to him.

he went and entered into the castle] The margin of the *Rev. Ver.* gives the rendering of the text with a different punctuation: "he heard of their lying in wait, having come in *upon them* and he entered, &c."

17. *Then Paul called one of the centurions*, &c.] The Apostle was under the charge of a military guard, and so would have no difficulty in getting his message conveyed. And the knowledge that he was a Roman citizen, and that by birth, would have spread among the soldiery and would not be without its influence.

for he hath a certain thing [*Rev. Ver.* something] *to tell him*] We have nothing to guide us to a knowledge of how Paul's nephew became acquainted with the plot to murder his uncle. As we know nothing of any kinsmen of St Paul being Christians we may perhaps be right in supposing that the young man was a Jew, present in Jerusalem on account of the feast, and that he had heard among the Jewish population about the uproar, and the undertaking of the would-be assassins. In his interview with the chief captain it is clear that he was prepared with evidence which was convincing to that officer.

18. *he took him, and brought him*, &c.] With soldier-like obedience and raising no questions.

Paul the prisoner] A name which St Paul was often afterwards to apply to himself. Cp. Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1; Philemon 1 and 9, &c.

and prayed me] In the older English the verb "pray" as here used is no more than "ask," which latter verb is here given by the *Rev. Ver.*, but it is a needless interference with the older diction.

to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain took him by the 19
hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me? And he said, The Jews 20
have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou 21
yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them moe *than* forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that *they* will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee. So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and 22
charged *him*, *See thou* tell no *man* that thou hast shewed

19. *the chief captain took him by the hand*] The messenger from a Roman citizen was entitled to some consideration, and the action of the chief captain is meant to encourage the young man. The chief captain would naturally incline to favour Paul after his conversation with him, rather than his Jewish accusers. We can gather this from the tone of the letter which he subsequently sent to Cæsarea.

and went with him aside privately, and asked him] The adverb "privately" is better joined with the verb "asked" as in the *Rev. Ver.*: this is more in accordance with the Greek order, and such an adverb is somewhat out of place with the first verb, in which privacy is implied without such an addition.

20. *as though they would inquire*] The oldest MSS. give "*as though* thou *wouldest inquire.*" It is more probable that this older reading was altered to agree with the plural in verse 15, than that the plural was changed into the singular. It was natural enough for the speaker among the Zealots to say to the chief priests "as though ye would inquire," and it is equally natural that Paul's nephew, speaking to the chief captain, who had control of the whole proceedings, should say "as though *thou* wouldest inquire."

21. *But do not thou yield unto them*] More literally, "Do not thou therefore yield, &c." (with *Rev. Ver.*).

which have bound themselves with an oath] The Greek is the same as in verse 12. It is better therefore to render as there "bound themselves under a curse." Beside which, the invocation implied in the original is much stronger than is indicated by our English "oath." And to vary the English rendering gives an idea of variation in the Greek, which in one continuous narrative should be avoided.

looking for a promise] *Rev. Ver.* "the promise" i. e. the one which they are coming to ask you to make.

22. *So the chief captain then let the young man depart*] There is but one conjunction in the original, which is doubly rendered here by *So* and *then*. It is better to omit the latter.

and charged him, See thou tell no man, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.* has

23 these *things* to me. And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea, and horsemen threescore *and* ten, and spearmen two hundred, at
24 the third hour of the night; and provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the
25 governor. And he wrote a letter after this manner:

"charging him, Tell no man, &c." The Greek is literally "charging him to tell, &c." but though this is correct enough in Greek when a sentence like "that thou hast shewed, &c." is to follow it cannot stand in English; so for the infinitive "to tell" an imperative or its equivalent must be substituted. The A. V. has taken the one, the *Rev. Ver.* the other way of rendering.

that thou hast shewed [*Rev. Ver.* signified] &c.] This change is made because the same word was so rendered in verse 15.

23. *to go to Cesarea*] The residence of the Roman governor and the seat of the chief jurisdiction. The preposition is not the usual one. Hence the *Rev. Ver.* gives "to go *as far as* Cæsarea." The distance between Jerusalem and Cæsarea is about 70 miles.

and spearmen] The Greek word is an unusual one, and signifies 'graspers by the right hand.' Hence it has been explained, as in the A. V., of soldiers who carried a spear in their right hand; others have thought a military guard was meant who kept on the right hand of the prisoners of whom they had charge. The Vulgate gives *lanceárii*, lancers.

at the third hour of the night] This would be, according to Jewish reckoning, at 9 P.M.

24. *and provide them beasts*] Here is an infinitive, in dependence on the verb in the previous verse, to mark which the *Rev. Ver.* inserts *he bade them*.

Felix the governor] He was made procurator of Judæa by Claudius in A.D. 53. He was the brother of Pallas, the favourite freedman of Claudius, and it was by the interest of his brother, that Felix was advanced, and retained in his position even after the death of Claudius. The character of Felix, as gathered both from Roman and Jewish historians, is that of a mean, profligate and cruel ruler, and even the troublous times in which he lived are not sufficient to excuse the severity of his conduct. After his return to Rome, on the appointment of Festus to be governor in his stead, Felix was accused by the Jews of Cæsarea and only saved by the influence which his brother Pallas had with Nero, as he had had with his predecessor. Felix was connected with the Herodian family by his marriage with Drusilla the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. He continued to hold office at Cæsarea for two years after St Paul's coming there (xxiv. 27) and during the whole of that time the Apostle was his prisoner.

25. *a letter after this manner*] [*Rev. Ver.* form]. As both the writer and receiver of the letter were Romans, it is most likely that Latin would be the language of the original, and that St Luke has

26—30. *Letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix.*

Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix 26
sendeth greeting. This man was taken of the Jews, and 27
should have been killed of them: then came I with an
army, and rescued him, having understood that he was
a Roman. And when I would have known the cause 28

given us a representation of the substance of the document rather than its very words.

26—30. LETTER OF CLAUDIUS LYSIAS TO FELIX.

26. *the most excellent governor*] The title "most excellent" is that which is given by St Luke at the beginning of his Gospel to the Theophilus for whom he wrote it. Hence it is probable that Theophilus held some official position, it may be under the Romans in Macedonia, where St Luke remained for some time and where he may probably have written his gospel.

sendeth greeting] The *Rev. Ver.* omits the first word. The original has only the infinitive "to rejoice" which is of course governed by some word indicating a wish, i.e. = "biddeth to rejoice," "wisheth joy."

27. *This man was taken of the Jews*] The verb implies a seizure or arrest. It is used (Matth. xxvi. 55; Mark xiv. 48) of the party of men who came to seize our Lord, and (Acts xii. 3) of Herod Agrippa's arrest of St Peter.

It is to be noted that the chief captain employs the word for *man*, which in the original implies respect, no doubt because he was presently about to mention that he was a Roman citizen. The same distinction exists in Latin as in Greek, so that the original may have been in either language. There can be little doubt that Roman officers at this time were familiar enough with Greek to write in it, if need were.

and should have been killed of them] The *Rev. Ver.* modifies the obsolescent English, and reads "was about to be slain of them." The chief captain does not give a very exact report of what had happened. He says nothing about the strife between the two religious parties; perhaps he did not understand its nature and cause.

then came I with an army, and rescued him] *Rev. Ver.* "*when I came upon them with the soldiers, and*, &c." This must refer rather to the first rescue from the mob in the Temple-precincts (xxi. 32). There is no word said of what happened afterwards, the binding with two chains, and the intention of scourging the prisoner.

having understood [*R. V.* learned] *that he was a Roman*] The chief captain put this in such wise as to claim credit for interference on behalf of a Roman citizen, and in so doing omits to state that it was only when Paul was about to be scourged and protested against it, that he was discovered to be a citizen of Rome by birth.

28. *And when I would have known*, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.* more literally "and desiring to know, &c." The method by which the chief

wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their
29 council: whom I perceived to be accused of questions
of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy
30 of death or of bonds. And when it was told me how that
the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee,
and gave commandment to *his* accusers also to say before
thee what *they had* against him. Farewell.

31—35. *Paul is brought to Cesarea, and kept prisoner by Felix.*

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul,
32 and brought *him* by night to Antipatris. On the morrow

captain proposed to learn the charge against Paul was by scourging the prisoner. Cp. xxii. 24.

29. *whom I perceived* [*R. V.* found] *to be accused*, &c.] At first he would have discovered that the outcry against St Paul had something to do with the regulations of the temple, then that there was a dispute about the resurrection of those who were dead, and that on this point some of the Jewish leaders sided with Paul. Such questions about their law would seem to the Roman officer quite as unworthy of consideration as they did to Gallio at Corinth (xviii. 15).

30. *And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man*] In the oldest MSS. there is no mention made of "the Jews." The *Rev. Ver.* therefore renders "and when it was shewn to me that there would be a plot against the man."

I sent straightway to thee] i.e. I sent him. The pronoun is supplied in the *Rev. Ver.* as needful to the sense. Of course Lysias implies by his language that he felt that Felix was a more fit person than himself to deal with such a case.

and gave commandment, &c.] By reason of the text in the oldest MSS. the *Rev. Ver.* has, in the latter part of this clause, "to speak against him before thee." The word "Farewell" is also unsupported by the earliest authorities.

31—35. PAUL IS BROUGHT TO CESAREA, AND KEPT PRISONER BY FELIX.

31. *Then* [So] *the soldiers*, &c....*took Paul*] i. e. they formed a party for his escort, and took him among them.

and brought him by night] i. e. that same night, starting off early in the night and travelling during night-time, thus getting clear away from Jerusalem before the ambush of the Jews was prepared.

to Antipatris] This place was 42 miles from Jerusalem and 26 from Cæsarea. It was in early times called Capharsaba, but Herod the Great rebuilt it and named it Antipatris in memory of his father Antipater. It lay in a beautiful part of the Vale of Sharon and was both well watered and rich in wood. The remains of a Roman road have been

they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: who, when they came to Cesarea, and delivered the 33
epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.
And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of 34
what province he was: and when he understood that *he was*
of Cilicia; I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are 35

found close by it. For notices of the older city, see Josephus, *Ant.* XVI. 5. 2; 1 Macc. vii. 31; of the place as rebuilt, see Josephus, *B. J.* I. 4. 7; II. 19. 1 and 9; IV. 8. 1.

32. *On the morrow*] The original has a conjunction which the *Rev. Ver.* represents by "But." These men would return to Jerusalem again on the day of the intended plot.

they left the horsemen to go with him] Now that they were far away from Jerusalem and in no fear of a surprise, seventy horsemen were guard enough for the remainder of the way. But it may give us some idea of the dangerous state of the country at the time when we consider that the chief captain thought it needful to send with this one prisoner a guard of 470 soldiers. We may also form some idea of what the garrison in Jerusalem must have been when so many men could be detached at a moment's notice.

and returned to the castle] Apparently coming back as quickly as it was possible for them to do so. As the road was one much travelled they were probably able to obtain a change of horses here and there.

33. *who, when they came to Cesarea*] The *Rev. Ver.* breaks up the relative into a conjunction and a personal pronoun. "And they, when, &c." This makes the reference to the horsemen more clear.

and delivered the epistle [letter] *to the governor*] It is not easy to see what led the A. V. to give "epistle" here and "letter" for the same word in ver. 25. Sometimes rhythm may account for such a variation, but that is not the case here.

presented Paul also] If the letter as given above be a copy of the original, the prisoner was not mentioned in it by name, but the soldiers would merely declare that this was the man that had been committed to their charge.

34. *And when the governor had read the letter*] The oldest MSS. have nothing either for "the governor" or "the letter." Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "And when he had read it."

of what province he was] Cilicia had been at one time, and perhaps still was, attached to the province of Syria. It was so in the time of Quirinus. This will explain why at once Felix without question decided that, at the proper time, he would hear the cause.

35. *I will hear thee*] The verb implies a complete and thorough hearing of a case. "I will give thee a full hearing." The *Rev. Ver.* renders "I will hear thy cause."

when thine accusers are also come] Assuming that they would appear, since they had been bidden to do so by the chief captain, as he had explained in his letter. Of course Lysias had not said a word of this

also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.

1—9. *Arrival of the Accusers. Speech of Tertullus, their advocate.*

24 And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertullus,

to the Jews when his letter was written, but intended to do so when Paul was safely on the road to Cæsarea.

to be kept in Herod's judgment hall] The word rendered "judgment hall" is "prætorium," and may signify either the palace of a prince, the tent of a general, or the barracks of the soldiery. Here it is probably the name of the palace which Herod had erected for himself, and which now was used as the governor's residence. It seems (from xxiv. 24—26) that it was close to the quarters of Felix himself, and that Paul could speedily be sent for. Render "Herod's palace" (with *Rev. Ver.*). The verb employed in the sentence only implies that Paul was to be taken care of; he was not kept in close imprisonment. "A Roman and uncondemned" would not be subject to needless indignities, when his accusers were Jews who could make no such claim for consideration. Cf. xxiv. 23.

XXIV. 1—9. ARRIVAL OF THE ACCUSERS. SPEECH OF TERTULLUS, THEIR ADVOCATE.

1. *And after five days*] Most naturally this means after St Paul's arrival in Cæsarea, and the events narrated at the end of chap. xxiii. But it may mean five days after the departure of the Apostle from Jerusalem. The chief captain would give notice to the high priest of what he had done as soon as it was safe to do so. After learning that they must go to Cæsarea with their accusation, the enemies of St Paul would spend some little time in preparing their charge for the hearing of Felix, and in providing themselves with an advocate. And as they would not probably travel with as much haste as St Paul's convoy did, five days is not a long interval to elapse before they arrived in Cæsarea.

Ananias the high priest] He would be sure to be hot against the Apostle after that speech about the "whited wall."

descended] *Rev. Ver.* [came down], i.e. from the capital to the sea-coast city of Cæsarea.

with the elders] The best MSS. have "*with* certain *elders*." It is not likely that all the elders came. There would be some, who belonged to the Pharisees, who would rather have spoken in favour of St Paul. Those who came would be Sadducees, and so only a portion of the Council.

and with a certain orator named Tertullus] *Rev. Ver.* "*and with an orator, one Tertullus.*" This man, as we may judge from his name, which is a modification of the Latin *Tertius*, was a Roman, and would be chosen because of his knowledge of Roman law, and his ability

who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was 2
called *forth*, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying,

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble 3

to place the case before Felix in such a light as to make it seem that Paul was dangerous to the Roman power, and not merely a turbulent and renegade Jew. We see below that he endeavoured to do this.

who informed, &c.] Better with *Rev. Ver.* "And they informed." Thus it is shewn that the relative in the original refers not merely to Tertullus but to the whole deputation. The verb is one which St Luke uses in other places (Acts xxv. 2, 15) of the laying a formal information before a judge. It is also used, Esther ii. 22, of Esther laying the information of the plot of the two chamberlains before king Ahasuerus.

2. *And when he was called forth*] There is nothing in the original to represent "forth" which is consequently omitted by the *Rev. Ver.* The "calling" referred to is that of the crier of the court calling on the case.

Tertullus began to accuse him] St Luke has given us but the digest of the advocate's speech. The seven verses, in which it is included, and a large part of which is occupied with compliments to the judge, would not have occupied three minutes in the delivery.

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness] [much peace] The orator seizes on almost the only point in the government of Felix on which he could hang any praise. By severity he had put down false Messiahs, and the partizans of an Egyptian magician, as well as riots in Cæsarea and Jerusalem, so that the country was in a more peaceful condition than it had been for a long time past.

and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence] Better (with *Rev. Ver.* and in accordance with the oldest MSS.) "and that by thy providence evils are corrected for this nation." The word rendered "providence" is found 2 Macc. iv. 6 where what is literally "without the king's providence" is rendered "unless the king did look thereto." It was by the severe looking thereto of Felix that disorders were corrected, though we learn from Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 9; *Ann.* xii. 54) that his severity in the end bore evil fruit, and it seems probable that his main motive in suppressing other plunderers was that there might be the more left for himself.

3. *we accept it always* [Better, in all ways] *and in all places*] The word rendered "in all ways" is only found here in N. T. and does not mean "always." Some would join "in all ways and in all places" with the former part of the sentence thus: "evils are corrected for this nation in all ways and in all places." "We accept it" means "we acknowledge and are glad of it."

most noble [*R. V.* excellent] *Felix*] The adjective is the same title which was given to Felix in the letter from Claudius Lysias, and which is afterwards given to Festus by St Paul (Acts xxvi. 25).

4 Felix, with all thankfulness. Notwithstanding, that I be
not further tedious unto thee, I pray *thee* that thou wouldest
5 hear us of thy clemency a few words. For we have found
this man a pestilent *fellow*, and a mover of sedition among
all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the
6 sect of the Nazarenes: who also hath gone about to pro-

4. *be not...tedious*] The notion in the verb is that of stopping a person's way and so hindering him. Tertullus would imply that Felix was so deeply engaged in his public duties that every moment was precious.

5. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow*] The Greek literally says "a pestilence." The same word in the plural is translated "pestilent fellows" in 1 Macc. x. 61, and it is further explained there by "men of a wicked life." When they say "we have found" it is implied that they have already spent some pains in detecting the evil ways of the prisoner.

and a mover of sedition] (**insurrections**, with oldest MSS. and *Rev. Ver.*). The first charge had been one of general depravity. On coming to particulars Tertullus puts that first which would most touch the Roman power, and against which Felix had already shewn himself to be severe. Insurrections were of such common occurrence that one man might at this time be readily the prime mover in many.

among all the Jews throughout the world] We must bear in mind that Paul had been assailed at a time when Jerusalem was full of strangers come to the feast. It is not improbable that from some of the Jewish visitors particulars had been gathered about the Apostle's troubles at Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus and elsewhere, which in the minds and on the lips of his accusers would be held for seditious conduct, conduct which had brought him at times under the notice of the tribunals. This Tertullus would put forward in its darkest colours. "The world" at this time meant "the whole Roman Empire." Cp. Cæsar's decree (Luke ii. 1) that "all the world" should be taxed.

a ringleader] The word is used in classical Greek of the front-rank men in an army.

of the sect of the Nazarenes] The adjective is used as a term of reproach equivalent to "the followers of him of Nazareth," which origin was to the mind of the Jews enough to stamp Jesus as one of the many false Messiahs. Cp. on the despised character of Nazareth, John i. 46.

6. *who also hath gone about* [**who moreover assayed** *R. V.*] *to profane the temple*] The old English "gone about" was equivalent to "attempted." Cp. Shaks. *Mids. Ni. D.* IV. i. 212: "Man is but an ass, if he *go about* to expound this dream." But the expression is somewhat obsolete now.

It is noteworthy that the Jews no longer adhere to their definite charge as made xxi. 28, but only impute to St Paul the attempt at profanation.

fane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. But the chief captain Lysias came 7
upon us, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by 8
examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all

whom we took] i.e. by main force. They would represent their proceedings as an arrest of a grave offender.

and would, &c.] These words, as well as verse 7 and verse 8 down to "come unto thee" are omitted in nearly all the oldest MSS., and by the *Rev. Ver.*, while the Greek Text, in those MSS. where it is found, exhibits many variations. But in spite of this it is very difficult to see how the advocate could have avoided some allusion to the circumstances mentioned in these words. Of course he puts the matter in a light most favourable to the Jews. "We would have judged him according to our law" is very different language from that in which (xxiii. 27) Lysias describes Paul as in danger to be killed by the Jews. The action of Lysias too is described by Tertullus as one of great violence. Probably the Roman soldiers would not handle the mob tenderly. But Tertullus is trying to cast blame upon the chief captain and to represent his party as doing all things according to law.

according to our law] Tertullus identifies himself, advocate-like, with the Jews whose mouthpiece he is.

7. *But the chief captain Lysias*] If this verse be an interpolation, it differs from others in the Acts very greatly. In other parts of the book such insertions have merely been made to bring the whole of a narrative under view at once, and there has been no variation of an account previously given elsewhere. But here we have a passage not representing the facts as stated before, but giving such a version of them as might make Lysias appear to have been in the wrong, and to have exercised his power in Jerusalem most arbitrarily against men who were only anxious to preserve the purity of their sacred temple. As both the Syriac and the Vulgate represent the passage it is not quite satisfactory to reject it.

8. *commanding his accusers to come unto thee*] Which Lysias had not done till Paul was removed beyond reach of pursuit.

by examining of whom] In the A.V. the relative "whom" is here naturally referred to "accusers." A glance at the Greek shews that this cannot be, for it is in the singular number. The *Rev. Ver.* gives the literal rendering of the passage thus, "*From whom thou wilt be able, by examining him thyself, to take knowledge*, &c." If the supposed interpolation be accepted as text, then "whom" and "him" would most properly be referred to Lysias. Felix might on the arrival of the chief captain question him and learn the truth of what had taken place. And with this the remark of Felix in verse 22 fits in, "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will determine your matter." If however the doubtful words be rejected, then the pronouns must refer to St Paul. But it is curious, to say the least, that Tertullus should suggest to Felix

9 these *things*, whereof we accuse him. And the Jews also assented, saying that these *things* were so.

10—21. *St Paul's answer to the charge.*

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the 11 more cheerfully answer for myself: because that thou mayest understand, that there are *yet* but twelve days since

that the truth of his case should be supported by an examination of the person accused. It has therefore been suggested that the word rendered "examining" has regard to some process of torture by which a prisoner might be forced to confess the truth. But for this no sufficient support has been found. The noun derived from this verb is employed (xxv. 26) for the inquiry before Agrippa. On the whole there seems quite as much to be said in favour of the *Textus Receptus* from internal evidence, as can be brought against it by the evidence of MSS.

9. *And the Jews also assented*] [*Rev. Ver.* joined in the charge.] The verb implies much more than assent. They made common cause with their representative, and by their own language reiterated the accusation.

saying (*R. V.* affirming) *that these things were so*] Ananias and the elders must have first instructed their orator. So that the speech was what they had supplied him with, and must have their accord.

10—21. St Paul's answer to the charge.

10. *Then Paul*, &c.] When the governor had given him leave to speak the Apostle addressed his defence to the points charged against him. He had not excited the people, nor been the leader of any body of Nazarenes, nor had he polluted the temple.

thou hast been of many years a judge] We have arrived in the history at about A. D. 58 or 59, and Felix had been made procurator in A. D. 52. So that "many years" is about six or seven. But many of the governors were recalled before they had held office so long. In verse 17 "many years" must be about four or five.

I do the more cheerfully, &c.] The best MSS. have the positive, "I cheerfully make my defence." St Paul was so far of good courage, because the experience of Felix, and his knowledge of Jewish manners and customs, would enable him to appreciate the statements which related to the Apostle's presence in Jerusalem.

11. *because that thou mayest understand*] *Rev. Ver.* taking a slightly different reading, "Seeing that thou canst take knowledge." The Apostle means that it was easy to find evidence about all that had happened in such a short space of time. Beside which Felix's knowledge of Jewish customs would tell him that this was just the time at which foreign Jews came to Jerusalem.

that there are yet but twelve days] The *Rev. Ver.* has the more

I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. And they neither 12
found me in the temple disputing with any *man*, neither
raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the
city: neither can they prove *the things* whereof they now 13
accuse me. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way 14
which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,

modern English, which is also closer to the Greek, "that it is not more than twelve days." The time may be accounted for thus: the day of St Paul's arrival, the interview with James on the second day, five days may be given to the separate life in the temple during the vow, then the hearing before the council, next day the conspiracy, the tenth day St Paul reached Cæsarea, and on the thirteenth day (which leaves five days (xxiv. 1), as Jews would reckon from the conspiracy to the hearing in Cæsarea) St Paul is before Felix. See Farrar's *St Paul*, II. 338 (note).

since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship] The *Rev. Ver.* gets rid of the antiquated English by rendering, "since I went up to worship at Jerusalem." But the A. V. gives more of the emphasis which St Paul intended to lay on the object of his visit. He went on purpose to worship. Was it likely that he would try to profane the temple? And the verb which he uses expresses all the lowly adoration common among Orientals. The Apostle probably chose it for this reason. He would have Felix know that it was in a most reverent frame of mind that he came to the feast.

12. *And they neither found me*, &c.] The Apostle gives a flat denial to the charge of insurrection, and challenges them to prove any single point of it. He had not even entered into discussion with any man.

raising up the people] *Rev. Ver.* "stirring up a crowd." For the crowd was gathered by the Jews.

13. *neither can they prove* (*Rev. Ver.*, with MS. authority, adds **to thee**) *the things*, &c.] The proof must be such as the law required, not the mere multiplied assertions of the accusers. The verb implies a formal setting-forth of evidence, and is used by Josephus (*De vita sua*, 6) of *an array of proof* which he has set forth to shew that his fellow-countrymen did not enter on a war till they were forced.

14. *after the way which they call heresy*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "after the Way which they call a sect." The word is the same which is used in verse 5 for the "sect" of the Nazarenes. St Paul employs the expression "the Way," in that sense in which it soon became well known, to signify "the Christian religion." See note on ix. 2.

so worship I the God of my fathers] Better, as *Rev. Ver.*, "so **serve** I the God of **our** fathers." The verb is not the same as in verse 11. Here the notion is of service which a man is bound to pay. The Apostle means that he has cast off no morsel of his old allegiance. The adjective can equally be rendered by "*my* fathers" or "*our* fathers," but St Paul's aim is to shew that he has not severed himself from the ancestral faith of the whole nation, and so his thought would include himself with them.

believing all *things* which are written in the law and the
15 prophets: and have hope towards God, which they them-
selves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of
16 the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do
I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of
17 offence toward God, and *toward* men. Now after many
years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets] The *Rev. Ver.* gives very literally "all things which are according to the Law, and which are written in the Prophets." The Apostle thus testifies to his complete acceptance of all the Jewish Scriptures. Sometimes the division is given as "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms" (Luke xxiv. 44), but more frequently, as in the text, only two sections are named (cp. Matt. vii. 12, xi. 13, xxii. 40; Luke xvi. 16; John i. 45).

15. *and have* (*R. V.* having) *hope...which they themselves also allow*] (*R. V.* look for). Here the Apostle is of course alluding only to the Pharisees among his own people, but he puts them as representatives of the larger part of the nation. The *Rev. Ver.* renders "which these also themselves look for." If the Apostle employed the words in that sense he would be turning towards the body of Jews in the court rather than to the Sadducees and their spokesman.

that there shall be a resurrection of the dead] The best MSS. give nothing for the last three words. St Paul adheres to the point which had before provoked the anger of Ananias and his party, and they must have been the more irritated because the words of the Apostle declare their opponents, the Pharisees, to be holding the true faith, and imply that such is the general belief of the Jewish people.

both of the just and unjust] Speaking in the presence of Felix, the Apostle seems to have chosen words to touch the conscience of the Procurator.

16. *And herein do I exercise myself*] "Herein" i.e. in the worship, faith and hope spoken of in the two last verses. While holding this belief, and because I hold it, I try to keep my conscience clear. "I exercise myself" that I may, by constant training and striving, at length get near to what I aim after.

to have always a conscience void of offence, &c.] The *Rev. Ver.*, to preserve the Greek order, puts "alway" at the end of the verse. A man who strove for such an object was neither likely to be a profaner of the Temple, nor a pestilent mover of sedition. His religion was worked into his life.

17. *Now after many years*] He had come to Jerusalem on the return from his second missionary journey in A.D. 53. It was now A.D. 58, so that his absence had lasted four or five years (see note on verse 10).

I came to bring alms to my nation] These consisted of the money which had been collected in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia at

Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified 18
in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.
Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, 19
if they had ought against me. Or else let these same 20
here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while

St Paul's request, and which is often alluded to in his epistles (cp. 1 Cor. xvi. 1; Rom. xv. 26; 2 Cor. viii. 4, &c.). There could be no desire to wound the feelings of the Jews in a man who had come for such a purpose. It is noticeable too that he describes the alms as not for the Christians only, but for his nation, conveying by the word the impression of his great regard for all the Jews.

and offerings] These were the sacrifices connected with the vow which he had undertaken. They must be offered in the Temple, and the offerer was not likely to be one who thought of profaning the holy place.

18. *Whereupon*] According to the best MSS. the relative here, by its gender, must be referred to the "offerings" which have just been named. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) **Amidst which**, i.e. engaged in offering which oblations.

certain Jews from Asia] These words should, according to all authorities, be placed in the latter clause of the verse. Read "Amidst which they found, &c."

found me purified] i.e. abstaining from all things forbidden by the law of the Nazarites. See Numb. vi. 3—8.

neither with multitude, &c.] The gathering of a crowd and raising a disturbance would have been the first steps towards some act of profanation. But even this he had not done. The original requires that we should continue the sentence, "but there were certain Jews from Asia," as in the *Rev. Ver.* It was from the Asiatic Jews, perhaps those from Ephesus, that the uproar had at first been originated. It would appear also that part of Tertullus' argument was derived from their information. Of these Asiatic Jews St Paul was now about to speak, but he checks himself, and does not say any word against them, only that they ought to have been here to explain the offence for which he had been assailed.

19. *and object*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*), "and to make accusation." They had set the cry against him, and now did not come to say what he had done wrong. They were probably on their way home, now that the feast was over.

20. *Or else let these same here* (*R. V.* these men themselves) *say*] i.e. the Sadducees with Ananias. The assailants of St Paul were of two classes, first the Asiatic Jews, who were furious against him because of his preaching among the Gentiles in their cities, then those in Jerusalem who hated him for preaching the resurrection. He challenges them both, and when the former do not appear, he turns to the other.

if they have found any evil doing in me] The oldest MSS. have "what wrong doing they found," omitting "in me."

21 I stood before the council, except *it be* for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

22—27. *Adjournment of the cause. Felix's treatment of St Paul.*

22 And when Felix heard these *things*, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know
23 the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a

while (Better, *when*) *I stood before the council*] Up to the moment, when in the presence of the council he had spoken of the resurrection and so produced a division in the assembly, there was no act of St Paul which had to do with any disturbance. The tumult in the temple and while he was speaking from the Tower-stairs was all caused by the Jewish mob.

21. *except it be for this one voice*] i.e. this exclamation or cry. From xxiii. 6 we see that St Paul lifted up his voice, when he mentioned the resurrection.

I am called in question by (*R. V.* with MSS. *before*) *you*] "To call in question" means "to put one on his trial." Cf. Shaks. *Henry IV.* (pt. 2) I. 2. 68, "He that was in question for the robbery."

22—27. Adjournment of the cause. Felix's treatment of St Paul.

22. *having more perfect knowledge of that way*] Better "the way," i.e. the Christian religion, for which this soon became the accepted name. See on ix. 2. Felix was more likely to understand something of the relations between Judaism and Christianity, because he had a Jewish wife, Drusilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa I., one who had been brought by her position into connexion with the movements of the time.

For those introductory words of this verse represented in A.V. by "when he heard these things," there is no Greek in the oldest MSS. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "But Felix, having, &c."

When Lysias the chief captain shall come down] There had been nothing said in the letter of Lysias, so far as we have it, about his coming to Cæsarea, but no doubt he went often between Jerusalem and the residence of the governor. The language of this verse gives some support to the genuineness of verse 7. (See note there.)

I will know the uttermost of your matter] Better, "I will determine." Cp. xxiii. 15.

23. *And he commanded a centurion*] The Greek noun has the article, therefore the *Rev. Ver.* gives "the centurion." It might

centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that *he* should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. And after certain days, when Felix 24
came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent

perhaps be one of the two whom Lysias had put in charge of the conveyance of Paul (xxiii. 23). One might be appointed to go on to Cæsarea, while the other returned with the larger part of the convoy from Antipatris.

to keep Paul] The best MSS. omit the proper name. Read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "that he should be kept in charge." The verb only conveys the idea of safe keeping, not of severe detention, and it is clear that for some reason Felix shewed himself well-disposed towards the Apostle. Either his conscience moved him, or his hope of gain, or perhaps the flattery and compliments of Tertullus had overshot their mark.

and to let him have liberty] Better, "and should have indulgence." That is, there should be a relaxation of prison rules in his case.

and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance] In order to join on better with the previous clause, read (with *Rev. Ver.*) "and not to forbid any of his friends." The original has a word stronger than "acquaintance." It refers more particularly to such matters as country, home, family and friends, which are specially a man's *own*. Here from our limited knowledge we are only able to think of Philip the Evangelist who would be particularly a friend of St Paul, but he had been more than once before in Cæsarea, and he had no doubt made himself known there as in other places. Those unnamed disciples of Cæsarea (xxi. 16) would be among those who had a warm interest in St Paul, and it is clear from St Luke's language that there were friends at hand and ready to visit the Apostle when they were allowed.

to minister or come unto him] The best MSS. have no Greek for "or come." The verb "minister" implies the doing of those services of which a prisoner even under such liberal conditions must ever stand in need. They would be his means of communication with the outer world. And the cupidity of Felix may have suggested that through these friends the means might be supplied for purchasing the Apostle's release.

24. *And after certain days, when Felix came*, &c.] To conform to the Greek more strictly, the *Rev. Ver.* reads "But after certain days, Felix came, &c." It is difficult to say what is gained by this. Felix did not always reside in Cæsarea. After the first hearing of St Paul's cause he had gone away for a time, but on his return he sent for the Apostle to question him on his doctrine. Perhaps those words about the resurrection of the just and the unjust had made him uneasy.

with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess] She was a daughter of Herod Agrippa I. and so sister of Agrippa II. and of Bernice. She had formerly been married to Azizus, King of Emesa, but had been induced by Felix to leave her husband, and become his wife. Though she had been only six years of age when her father died (Acts xii. 23) she may have heard of the death of James the brother of John, and the

for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.
25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go *thy way* for *this* time; when I have a convenient season,
26 I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should

marvellous delivery of St Peter from prison. For such matters would be talked of long after they had happened, and perhaps her father's sudden death may have been ascribed by some to God's vengeance for what he had done against the Christians. Her marriage with the Gentile Felix shewed that she was by no means a strict Jewess, and what she had heard of Jewish opposition to St Paul's teaching may have made her, as well as her husband, desirous to hear him.

sent for Paul] The Apostle was lodged in some part of the procurator's official residence (see xxiii. 35, note) and so was close at hand.

and heard him concerning the faith in Christ] The best MSS. add *Jesus*. What St Paul would urge was not only a belief in the Christ, for whose coming all Jews were looking, but a belief that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah whom they had so long expected.

25. *And as he reasoned...and judgment* [*R.V.* the judgement] *to come*] It was to be no barren faith which St Paul commended, but was to have its fruits in the life. Felix perhaps expected some philosophical dissertation on the subject of the resurrection, and the life after death. His own conduct, of which Tacitus (*Ann.* XII. 54, *Hist.* V. 9) speaks as mean and cruel and profligate, would make the subjects on which St Paul addressed him peculiarly disturbing. For what if this man's teaching should be true?

Felix trembled] The expression is much stronger. It implies that he was filled with fear. Therefore the *Rev. Ver.* gives "was terrified." It can hardly be conceived that St Paul was ignorant of the character of those to whom he was speaking. Felix had been in office long enough to be well known. And the Apostle's themes were exactly those by which he could find the joints in the governor's harness. Of "righteousness" his life's history shews no trace, and for temperance, i.e. self-control, the presence of Drusilla by his side proved that he had no regard. Well might such a man be full of fear at the thought, as St Paul would urge it home, of the judgment after death. But the influence of his terror passed away, for we do not read that the Apostle ever beheld such signs of penitence as led him to quiet the terror, by preaching Christ as the atonement for sin.

when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee] [*Rev. Ver.* call thee unto me]. The convenient season never arrived. Felix did not change his conduct. When two years more of his rule were ended and he was superseded by Festus, the Jews in Cæsarea brought an accusation against him before Nero, and had it not been for his brother Pallas' influence he would have been punished for his cruelty and injustice. We have no record of how long he lived after his recall from Cæsarea.

26. *He hoped also* (*Rev. Ver.* withal) *that money should have been*

have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into 27
Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

(*R. V.* would be) *given him of Paul*] He had heard the Apostle speak of the contributions which he had gathered for the Jews in Jerusalem. His thought would naturally be that if he could raise money for the needs of others, he could do so for his own release.

that he might loose him] These words are unrepresented in the oldest MSS., and read exactly like a marginal explanation which in time made its way into the text.

wherefore (*R. V.* wherefore also) *he sent...communed with him*] The original gives two reasons why Felix sent for Paul. First he desired to hear about the faith in Christ, and secondly to give the Apostle a chance of offering him a bribe. The verb "communed" implies that he brought about somewhat of a friendly intercourse with his prisoner. In this way the proposal for any terms of release would have been made easy.

27. *But after two years*] More literally the *Rev. Ver.* "But when two years were fulfilled;" and it may be that St Luke would indicate by his expression, that it was not a reckoning of time such as was usual among the Jews, where portions of a year were sometimes counted for a whole, but that the Apostle's detention endured for two years complete.

Porcius Festus came into Felix' room] Festus was made governor by Nero probably in A.D. 60 and died in about two years. Josephus (*B. J.* II. 14. 1) gives him a far better character than his predecessor, but he had the same kind of difficulties to deal with in the outbreaks of the populace and the bands of assassins with which the country was infested. (Jos. *Ant.* XX. 8. 10) The *Rev. Ver.* "Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus" comes nearer to the literal rendering "Felix received Porcius Festus as a successor," but does not make the meaning clearer, and to put "Felix" as the subject in this sentence and in that which immediately follows gives an awkward sound to the English, which was neatly avoided in A.V.

and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure] The literal sense is "to store up for himself favour with the Jews," therefore the *Rev. Ver.* gives the proper rendering, "and desiring to gain favour with the Jews." Of course it may be said that if he shewed favour to them he would gain favour with them. But what he particularly desired at this time was to blunt the anger which the Jews (especially those of Cæsarea) felt against him, that they might be less bitter in their charges against him on his recall. And so he used Paul as his "Mammon of unrighteousness" and left him detained that he might make himself friends thereby.

left Paul bound] [*R. V.* in bonds.] This seems to indicate that before his departure Felix withdrew the indulgence which had been

1—12. *Arrival of Festus. Paul's cause heard before him. Paul appeals to the Emperor.*

25 Now when Festus was come into the province, after
2 three days he ascended from Cesarea to Jerusalem. Then
the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him
3 against Paul, and besought him, and desired favour against

previously granted to Paul, and put him in bonds, so as to give to his successor the impression, which the Jews desired, that he was deserving of punishment. It would be very interesting to know what St Paul did during the two years that he was kept at Cæsarea. Various conjectures have been ventured on, but none with any ground of certainty. Some, accepting St Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, point to this period as the time of its composition. Others assign to this imprisonment those letters of the Apostle which speak so much of his bonds, viz. to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians and Philemon, but the evidence in favour of Rome as the place whence they were written seems far to outweigh all that can be said on behalf of Cæsarea. Our only reflection on such a gap as this in the history of St Paul's work must be that the Acts was not intended to be a narrative of any man's labours, but how God employed now this servant, now that, for the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ. The remembrance of this will prevent us seeking from the book what it was not meant to give.

XXV. 1—12. ARRIVAL OF FESTUS. PAUL'S CAUSE HEARD BEFORE HIM. PAUL APPEALS TO THE EMPEROR.

1. *Now when Festus was come into the province*] This may either mean "when he had reached Cæsarea," to which, as the seaport, he would naturally come first; or, with margin of the *Rev. Ver.*, "when he had entered upon his province." The former seems to be the preferable sense because of what follows.

after three days he ascended (*R. V.* went up)] He took a very short time to make himself acquainted with what would be his principal residence, and then went up to the capital.

2. *Then the high priest*] *R. V.* "And the chief priests." For the best MSS. give the plural. No doubt Ananias, as before, was the leader of the accusation, but he got others of his own class to support him in Jerusalem. He was their representative when the hearing was in Cæsarea.

and the chief of the Jews] This might mean "the chief part;" therefore it is better, with *R. V.*, to read "the principal men of the Jews." The wealthiest men of the nation belonged to the Sadducees.

informed him against Paul] The verb indicates that the proceedings here assumed a legal form. It was no mere mention in any irregular way, but a definite charge was made, no doubt in the same terms which Tertullus had used before.

him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him. But Festus answered, that 4
Paul should be kept at Cesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*. Let them therefore, said he, which 5
among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any *wickedness* in him. And when he had 6

3. *and desired favour against him*] i.e. they begged that their case might have some special consideration. They were many and rich; the accused man was alone and an obscure person, and it was much easier to bring one man from Cæsarea, than for their whole body to undertake a journey from Jerusalem thither. No doubt too they hoped that with a new governor their influence and good position would not be without weight.

laying wait in the way to kill him] They still adhered to their plan of assassination, than which no crime was more common at this time in Judæa. Perhaps too those men who had bound themselves by a vow, though they had been forced to break it, yet felt dissatisfied that Paul was still alive.

4. *But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept*, &c.] This hardly gives the force of the original, which is better rendered in the *Rev. Ver.*, "that Paul was kept in charge at Cæsarea." The governor's position was that the prisoner had been placed by his predecessor in a certain state of custody, and that this could not be interfered with.

would (*R. V.* was about to) *depart shortly thither*] A governor newly arrived must move about actively, and could not remain long even in the capital. To have waited till all the arrangements, which the accusing party were supposed to be ready to make, were complete, would have consumed time, which must be occupied in learning the details of his provincial charge.

5. *Let them therefore...which among you are able*] *R. V.* "which are of power among you." The words of Festus do not refer to whether some of them could go to Cæsarea or not, but to the character of those who should go down, that they should be men of influence and character, such as would fitly represent the powerful body who appealed to him.

go down with me] For they were evidently wealthy persons, whose companionship on the journey might be no discredit to the governor. Festus was no doubt willing to conciliate the influential people in the nation, though he had refused to break through a regulation of his predecessor at their request.

and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him] A large number of MSS., with the *Text. Rec.*, give no word for "wickedness." But in some of the oldest Texts there is a word which signifies "out of the way." The *Rev. Ver.* therefore gives "and if there is anything amiss in the man, let them accuse him." The adjective is the same that is so rendered, Luke xxiii. 41, "This man hath done nothing *amiss*."

tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cesarea; and the next day sitting in the judgment
7 seat, commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints
8 against Paul, which they could not prove. While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor *yet* against Cesar, have
9 I offended any *thing at all.* But Festus, willing to do

6. *more than ten days*] The oldest texts read "**not** more than eight or ten days." This seems the more likely reading. It is more probable that the writer would use words to mark the shortness of the stay, than a form which would seem to describe ten days as a long residence at Jerusalem. Festus was evidently full of business and anxious to get it done.

and the next day] *Rev. Ver.* "on the morrow." The Jewish authorities must have accepted the governor's invitation, and have gone down along with him, so that the hearing could begin at once.

7. *the Jews which came*, &c.] Better, with *Rev. Ver.*, "which had come, &c."

stood round about] The best authorities give "*round about* **him**." They were eager to set upon him, and so compassed him on every side.

and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul] The best MSS. have nothing for the last two words. Read, with *Rev. Ver.*, following a slightly different text, "bringing against him many and grievous charges." In the two years lapse of time they had gathered up every rumour which they could collect, and these they brought forward, even though they could not support them by evidence.

8. *While he answered for himself*] *Rev. Ver.*, with MSS., "While Paul said in his defence." He offered an "Apologia" for himself. He did not make a defence against the unsubstantiated charges, but alluded only to those points on which they would try to prove their case, i.e. his alleged attempt to defile the Temple, his breaches of the Jewish law, and any insurrectionary outbreaks, in which the accusers would try to prove him a leader, and which might be construed into opposition to the Roman power. On this last his accusers would lay most stress. St Luke has only given us the three heads of St Paul's Apologia.

Neither against the law of the Jews] The accusation on the former occasion had not dwelt on this point, but in the course of two years they had discovered that the Apostle had taught among the Gentiles that circumcision was no necessary door for admission to Christianity, and this they would construe into an offence against the Jewish law.

have I offended any thing at all] *Rev. Ver.*, "have I sinned at all."

9. *But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure*] Better (with *R. V.*) "desiring to gain favour with the Jews." Cp. xxiv. 27. Though he had

the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these *things* before me? Then said Paul, I stand at Cesar's judgment 10
seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I 11
be an offender, or have committed any *thing* worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none *of these things* whereof these accuse me, no *man* may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar. Then Festus, when 12

not consented to their request when he was in Jerusalem, he now went some way towards doing so by his question to Paul.

Wilt thou...before me] What Festus proposed was equivalent to acquitting the Apostle of any charge which would come under Roman law. He is therefore appealed to on the other accusations. The offences against the law of the Jews and against the Temple must be heard before the Sanhedrin. Would Paul accept an acquittal on one count and submit to a trial before his own people on the rest? And Festus would be present to see that right was done.

10. *I stand at Cesar's judgment seat*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "I am standing before Cæsar's judgment seat." This represents more nearly the sense of the original, which implies, "I have been and am standing." The Roman authorities had taken charge of him and had kept him in custody for two years. Of this he reminds the governor, and refuses to be turned over to another tribunal, where he would have for judges, if he ever were allowed to live till his trial, those persons who had been cognizant of the plot to murder him.

where I ought to be judged] Because I am a Roman citizen.

as thou very well knowest] *Rev. Ver.* "as thou also, &c." St Paul does not mean to say that Festus is to be blamed for his proposal. Probably he saw that the governor was acting with a view to conciliate the Jews. But he intends to say that after all that the governor has heard, any man would say at once that there was no case against the prisoner.

11. *For if I be an offender*] The best MSS. have not "For." Read, with *Rev. Ver.*, "If then I am a wrong-doer." He has asserted that he was innocent so far as the Jews are concerned. If there be anything against him, it is for the civil jurisdiction of Rome, not for the religious tribunal at Jerusalem, to decide upon.

no man may deliver me unto them] The full idea of the verb is expressed by the margin of the *Rev. Ver.*, "no man may grant me by favour." The use of this word confirms the notion that St Paul saw through what the governor was doing. The word "may" represents the Greek "is able," and therefore the "can" of the *Rev. Ver.* is to be approved. There is no power anywhere which can give me up to them.

I appeal unto Cesar] The final tribunal being the hearing of the Emperor himself.

he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

13—22. *Festus consults King Agrippa about his prisoner. Agrippa wishes to hear Paul's defence.*

13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came
14 unto Cesarea to salute Festus. And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by

12. *when he had conferred with the council*] Having taken the opinion of those who sat as assessors with him. Such persons would be specially needed for a new governor, and the governors of Judæa were changed frequently. Of the existence of such assessors in the provinces, see Suetonius *Tib.* 33; *Galba* 19.

13—22. FESTUS CONSULTS KING AGRIPPA ABOUT HIS PRISONER. AGRIPPA WISHES TO HEAR PAUL'S DEFENCE.

13. *And after certain days*] More literally, but with no manifest gain, *Rev. Ver.* gives "Now when certain days were passed."

king Agrippa] This was Herod Agrippa II., son of Herod Agrippa I., and consequently a great-grandson of Herod the Great. He was therefore brother of Bernice and Drusilla. On account of his youth he was not appointed to succeed his father when he died. But after a time the Roman Emperor gave him the kingdom of Chalcis, from which he was subsequently transferred to govern the tetrarchies formerly held by Philip and Lysanias, and was named king thereof. His kingdom was afterwards increased by the grant of other cities which Nero gave him. At the fall of Jerusalem he retired to Rome, with his sister Bernice, and there died A. D. 100. He had sided with the Romans in the war against the Holy City. Festus was likely to avail himself of an opportunity of consulting Agrippa, for he would expect to be soundly advised by him on any question of Jewish law.

and Bernice] She was the eldest daughter of Herod Agrippa I. She had first been married to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis. Her connexion with her brother Agrippa II. was spoken of both by Roman and Jewish writers as sinful. She was subsequently married to Polemon, king of Cilicia, but soon left him and lived with Agrippa II. in Rome.

came unto Cesarea to salute Festus] *Rev. Ver.*, following MSS., gives "arrived at Cæsarea, and saluted Festus," with a marginal rendering "having saluted." This would seem to imply that the salutation had taken place elsewhere than at Cæsarea. This is very improbable. Cæsarea was the official residence of the governor, and thither would the vassal-king Agrippa come to pay his formal visit of welcome to the representative of Rome.

14. *And when they had been there many days*] *Rev. Ver.* "And as they tarried there many days;" a rendering which may be taken to mean that the length of their stay was a reason why Festus set Paul's

Felix: about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief 15
priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, desiring
to have judgment against him. To whom I answered, 16
It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man
to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers
face to face, and have licence to answer for himself con-
cerning the crime laid *against him*. Therefore, when they 17
were come hither, without any delay, on the morrow I sat
on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be
brought *forth*. Against whom when the accusers stood 18
up, they brought none accusation of *such things* as I
supposed: but had certain questions against him of their 19
own superstition, and of one Jesus, *which was* dead,

cause before the king. This is not the sense of the Greek, so the A.V. appears the better rendering.

15. *the chief priests*] See note on verse 2.

desiring to have judgment against him] The older MSS. give a stronger word for "judgment" than the *Text. Recept.* It implies that they held there could be but one opinion and that a condemnatory sentence might be at once pronounced, even by the newly arrived governor.

16. *to deliver any man to die*] The best MSS. omit the Greek for the last two words. *Rev. Ver.* renders "to give up any man." The verb is the same as in verse 11, and implies the granting as a favour. The language throughout shews that the Jews thought the influence of their party was enough to gain from Festus the condemnation of this so obscure a prisoner, whatever might be the merits of his case.

and have licence to answer for himself] The Greek word for *licence* is literally "place," and is here used figuratively for "opportunity." So Rom. xv. 23 St Paul says "having no more place in these parts," by which he means that there is no further opportunity for preaching the Gospel there. So *Rev. Ver.* gives "have had opportunity to make his defence."

17. *when they were come hither*] The Greek is (as *Rev. Ver.*) "come together here."

18. *of such things as I supposed*] Following the authority of some ancient MSS. the *Rev. Ver.* gives "of such evil things as, &c."

19. *of their own superstition* [*R. V.* religion]. The noun used here is cognate to the adjective employed by St Paul in speaking to the Athenians (xvii. 22). It is a term which might be employed by any one without offence in speaking of a worship with which he did not agree. Addressing Agrippa, Festus would not wish to say a word that might annoy, any more than St Paul wished to irritate the Athenians by his speech.

of one Jesus] Neither in the hearing of the cause before Felix nor

20 whom Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such *manner of* questions, I asked *him* whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these *matters*.
21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till
22 I might send him to Cesar. Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

23—27. *Assembly of the Court, and address of Festus.*

23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Ber-

when Festus made his inquiry, does St Luke record any mention of the name of Jesus, but it is clear from the explanation here given that not only had Paul stated the doctrine of the Resurrection generally, which the Pharisees accepted, but had also asserted in proof of it that Jesus had risen and "become the firstfruits of them that sleep."

20. *And because I doubted of such manner of questions*] *Rev. Ver.*, with ancient authorities, gives "And I, being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things." The whole subject was a strange one to Festus, and when he found that some Jews in part at least agreed with St Paul, while others of them were his bitter opponents, he could find no better plan than to turn to a Jew for an explanation. He did not himself know how to conduct an inquiry on such a subject, and yet the Jews' religion, being now allowed by the Empire, must have its causes adjudicated on.

21. *to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus*] *Rev. Ver.* "to be kept for the decision of the Emperor." The verb is that which occurs xxiv. 23 where the centurion was commanded to "keep" Paul. He desired to be under the care of the Roman authorities until his case could be properly heard. "Augustus," the title given first to Octavianus, was afterwards conferred on his successors, and so came to mean "His Imperial Majesty," whoever might be on the throne. The present "Augustus" was Nero. In the noun rendered "hearing" we have a word which implies "thorough inquiry."

22. *I would also hear the man myself*] *Rev. Ver.* "I also could wish [*marg.* was wishing] to hear, &c." The marginal rendering here given is the most literal and appears to bring out the meaning best. What Agrippa means to say is that he had for some time been wishing to see and hear St Paul.

23—27. Assembly of the Court and address of Festus.

23. *with great pomp*] The children follow in the steps of their father, who formerly had sat on his throne in Cæsarea arrayed in royal apparel, to listen to the flatteries of the Tyrian deputation (xii. 21).

nice, with great pomp, and were entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought *forth*. And 24 Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this *man*, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and *also* here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But 25 when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and *that* he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain 26 *thing* to write unto *my* lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a 27 prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes *laid* against him.

were entered] The A.V. of 1611 has "was entered," and so it will in consequence be found printed in most English Bibles. The correction is required by the original which is plural. So *Rev. Ver.*

the place of hearing] The word is found nowhere else in N.T. It was no doubt some special room attached to the governor's palace, where causes were tried. In classical Greek it signifies "a lecture-room."

chief captains] The Greek word *chiliarchos* is constantly used in N.T. for the "prefect" of a Roman cohort.

24. *have dealt with me*] *Rev. Ver.* "made suit to me." In all other places of the N.T. this word is used of "making intercession" to God.

and also here] No doubt the Sadducees from Jerusalem had been able in the course of two years to work up a great deal of feeling against Paul among their party in Cæsarea. So when Festus came he was appealed to by the great men of the residential city as well as by those from Jerusalem.

25. *committed nothing worthy of death*] To ask for the life of a prisoner because of some offence against the religious observances of the Jews would be absurd in the eyes of a Roman officer. The best texts give at the beginning of this verse "But I found that, &c."

to Augustus] See note on verse 21.

26. *unto my lord*] Octavianus by an edict forbade the title "Lord" to be given to him. The practice had its rise from parasites. But you find "Dominus" often used in Pliny's letters to Trajan. So that not many emperors were like Octavian.

before you] Spoken with a glance towards the chief priests and great persons who were present on the bench.

specially before thee] i.e. as one most likely to be able to clear up the difficulties which I feel about the prisoner.

1—23. *Paul's defence before Agrippa.*

26 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to
speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and
answered for himself:
2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall
answer for myself this day before thee touching all *the things*
3 whereof I am accused of the Jews: especially *because I know*
thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are
among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me
4 patiently. My manner of life from *my* youth, which was at
the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the
5 Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would

XXVI. 1—23. PAUL'S DEFENCE BEFORE AGRIPPA.

1. *and answered for himself*] *Rev. Ver.* "and made his defence." The verb is the same as before (xix. 33, xxiv. 10, xxv. 8) and intimates that what is coming is an *apologia*. St Luke here as in other places notices the gesture of the speaker.

2. *I think myself happy*] Because Agrippa was sure to understand much of the feeling imported into the case which would be entirely obscure to a Roman magistrate. Paul would thus be able to make his position clear, and get it explained through Agrippa to the Roman authorities.

because I shall answer for myself] As in the previous verse, "that I am to make my defence."

3. *especially because I know thee to be expert*] *Rev. Ver.* quite correctly "especially because thou art expert." The margin which *R. V.* gives "because thou art especially expert" might be accepted, but we have no reason to think that Agrippa was more than other persons of his station expert in Jewish customs.

4. *at the first*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "from the beginning." The Apostle though born in Tarsus yet came early to Jerusalem for his education, and it was in the Holy City that his character was formed and his manner of life shewed itself.

among mine own nation at Jerusalem] The oldest MSS. say "and at Jerusalem." This would imply that even before coming to Jerusalem, the Apostle had always dwelt among his own people, and so was not likely to be one who would undervalue Jewish privileges or offend against Jewish prejudices.

know all the Jews] Because in the persecution of the Christians he had made himself a conspicuous character, had been in favour with the chief priests and allowed to undertake the mission to Damascus.

5. *which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify*] Better (with *Rev. Ver.*) "having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify." The word for "from the first" is the same which

testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the 6
hope of the promise made of God unto *our* fathers: unto 7
which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day

St Luke uses (Luke i. 3) to indicate his perfect understanding of the Gospel story "from the very first." When we remember that the early part of his Gospel can hardly have been gathered from anybody but the Virgin Mary, who alone could know many of the details, we may well think that the word implies that St Paul had been known from his very childhood. The rest of the sentence seems to intimate that there were some among those who were now his accusers who could give evidence about his previous years if they were so minded.

the most straitest] There is nothing in the Greek to warrant the double superlative. Read "straitest."

sect] The word is that which is rendered "heresy" by the A. V. in xxiv. 14. Everywhere else in the Acts it is *sect*. In the Epistles, where the plural only occurs, it is "heresies."

our religion] The word refers more especially to the outward ceremonials of worship, such as those by which the Pharisees were specially distinguished.

6. *And now I stand and am judged*] *Rev. Ver.* "And now I stand *here* to be judged." The idea is "I am on my trial."

for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers] i.e. because I entertain the hope that the promise which God made to the patriarchs and to David shall be fulfilled to us. The "promise" must be of the Messiah and of His coming into the world as King. For this is what the ten tribes were looking for. But this in St Paul's view embraced the doctrine of the resurrection, because that was God's assurance to the world (Acts xvii. 31) that He who was so raised up was to be the judge of quick and dead.

7. *unto which promise*] This makes it clear that the promise was the sending of Him in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed.

our twelve tribes] For the Jews regarded themselves as representing the whole race, and not merely the two tribes of the kingdom of Judah. And this no doubt was true. For tribal names continued to be preserved and with the people of Judah there came back many of the members of the previous captivity of Israel. Thus in the N. T. we find (Luke ii. 36) that Anna was of the tribe of Aser, and St James addresses his Epistle (i. 1.) "to the twelve tribes that are scattered abroad" and Paul himself knew that he was of the tribe of Benjamin. Cp. also 2 Chron. xxxi. 1. for evidence of the existence of some of the ten tribes after the Captivity. In T. B. *Berachoth* 20[a] Rabbi Jochanan says "I am from the root of Joseph."

instantly serving God] i.e. earnestly serving God (as *R. V.*). The old use of the word "instantly" has disappeared, and is not very common in any writings but such as are marked by the use of Scripture phraseology, *e.g.* Latimer's Sermons, Bishop Pilkington's Works, &c.

and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king
8 Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be
thought *a thing* incredible with you, that God should raise
9 the dead? I verily thought with myself, that *I* ought to do
many *things* contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.
10 Which *thing* I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints
did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the
chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my
11 voice against *them*. And I punished them oft in every
synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being

For which hope's sake, king Agrippa] The two last words are omitted in many MSS., in some only the last one.

I am accused of the Jews] Emphatically placed to mark the inconsistency of the position. The Jews accuse Paul because he looks for the promise which was made to the forefathers of the Jewish race.

8. *Why should it be thought a thing incredible...that God*, &c.] More literally (with *Rev. Ver.*) "Why is it judged incredible with you if God doth raise the dead." The last clause is not to be understood hypothetically, but "If God doth, as he hath done in the case of Jesus." So that it is equivalent to "Why should you not believe that Jesus has been raised from the dead?"

9. *contrary to the name*] i.e. to the faith of Jesus Christ, into whose name believers were to be baptized. Cp. v. 41, note. "Name" is constantly used in O. T. as the equivalent of "Godhead," and any Jew who heard the language of such a verse as this would understand that the Christians held Jesus to be a divine Being.

of Jesus of Nazareth] Whom we preach now as raised by God from the dead, and as the fulfiller of the promises made to the fathers.

10. *Which thing I also did in Jerusalem*] Saul must have been a most active and prominent agent in the work of persecution in Jerusalem, for we learn here that the death of Stephen was not the only one for which he had given his vote. He had also had the warrant of the chief priests for other arrests beside those he intended to make in Damascus. We can see that the slaughter of the Christians was not in all cases the result of a sudden outburst of rage at some act or speech, but that some of them were imprisoned, then subjected to a form of trial, and afterwards put to death as men condemned by law.

11. *And I punished them oft in every synagogue*] The Gk. continues with a participial construction, represented in *Rev. Ver.* "and punishing...in all the synagogues." This closer representation of the original seems to add strength to the description of Saul's former zeal as a persecutor. Of the synagogues as places where offenders were accused and punished, cp. Matth. x. 17, xxiii. 34; Mark xiii. 9; Luke xii. 11, xxi. 12.

and compelled them to blaspheme] *Rev. Ver.* "I strove to make them blaspheme." The verb is that which is frequently rendered "constrain"

exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with 12
authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, 13
O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to 14
the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, 15

or "compel," but being in the imperfect tense, it seems to signify that the attempt was repeated often, and needed to be so, for it was not in some cases successful. Saul kept on with his constraint. "To blaspheme," i.e. the name of Jesus into which they had been baptized. They were to be forced to renounce the belief in the divinity of Jesus. Cp. on blasphemy of the divine Name, Lev. xxiv. 11—16.

even unto strange [*R. V.* foreign] *cities*] That is, cities outside the country of the Jews proper. So that, as it appears, Damascus was but one among several cities to which Saul had gone on his errand of punishment.

12. *Whereupon*] The Greek has "in which *things*," and the sense is given well by the margin of *R. V.* "on which errand."

with authority] *Rev. Ver.* "with the authority." Saul was the commissioner sent by the Jewish magistrates, and at this particular time Damascus had been assigned as the district where he was to search for the Christians.

13. *at midday*] There could be no question about the supernatural character of a light which overpowered the midday glare of an Eastern sun.

14. *I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying*] The oldest MSS. have only "a voice saying unto me." Saul alone gathered the import of what was said. His companions only heard the sound, not the words. Cp. Dan. x. 7.

in the Hebrew tongue [*R. V.* language] Which is therefore represented by a different orthography of the proper name, not "Saulos," the usual Greek form, but "Saoul," a transliteration of the Hebrew.

it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks [goad] This is the only place where the oldest MSS. give these words. See note on ix. 5. The figure is from an ox, being driven on in his work. When restive or lazy, the driver pricks him, and in ignorance of the consequences, he kicks back, and so gets another wound. The words would imply that God had been guiding Saul towards the true light for some time before, and that this zeal for persecution was a resistance of the divine urging. It is not unusual for men who are moved to break away from old traditions at such times, by outward acts, to manifest even more zeal than before for their old opinions, as if in fear lest they should be thought to be falling away. This may have been Saul's case, his kicking against the goads.

Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou
16 persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have
appeared unto thee for this *purpose*, to make thee a minister
and a witness both of *these things* which thou hast seen, and
17 *of those things* in the which I will appear unto thee; deliver-
ing thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom
18 now I send thee, to open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from
darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God,

16. *Who art thou, Lord*] The readiness with which "Lord," an expression of allegiance, comes to the Apostle's lips lends probability to the notion that God's promptings had been working in his heart before, and that the mad rage against "the Way" was an attempt to stifle them.

16. *to make* [*R. V.* appoint] *thee a minister*] The verb is that which in xxii. 14 is rendered "have chosen" (*R. V.* appointed), and implies a deliberate selection and appointment. Saul was "a chosen vessel" (ix. 15).

and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen] *Rev. Ver.* "a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me," with a certain amount of MS. authority, though A.V. is well supported. St Paul dwells not unfrequently in his Epistles on his having seen Jesus. Cp. 1 Cor. ix. 1, xv. 8, &c., and he makes this the ground of his independence in the Apostolic work, so that he can say he is not a whit behind any of the other Apostles.

and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee] St Paul was more favoured than the rest of the Apostles, as far as we gather from the N.T. records, with visions from God to guide and comfort him at critical points in his work. Cp. Acts xviii. 9, xxiii. 11; and 2 Cor. ii. 2. It was specially important that Paul should have seen Jesus, so that he might bear independent witness to the truth of his resurrection.

17. *delivering thee*] i.e. though they may and will seize upon thee and persecute thee, yet I am with thee and will save thee from their hands. From the first the Apostle knew that in every city persecution was to be his lot.

the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee] The best authorities (with *Rev. Ver.*) omit "now." The verb "send" is that from which the word "Apostle" comes, and its force is "I make thee my Apostle." In the oldest texts the *I* is emphatically expressed. "Thou art, as well as the rest, an Apostle chosen by me the Lord Jesus." The mission to the Gentiles seems to have been made clear to Saul from the very first. Compare his own language Gal. i. 16. And in Acts ix. 29 his preaching appears to have been rather directed to the Greek-Jews than to the members of the Church in Jerusalem.

18. *to open their eyes, and to turn them*] More literally *Rev. Ver.* "that they may turn." A sentence full of hope and promise of success. If the eyes of the Gentiles be but opened, then they will turn. In blindness the Jews often said (as Paul found) "We see," therefore their sin remained.

that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto 19
the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damas- 20
cus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and *then* to the Gentiles, that *they* should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these 21
causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about

them which are sanctified by faith that is in me] Better, with *Rev. Ver.*, "by faith in me." It is by their belief in Jesus that men are sanctified. And here "sanctified," as so often "saint" in St Paul's Epistles, is applied to those who have been set on the way of salvation, and not to those who are perfect in holiness. To that they will be brought if they persevere.

19. *I was not disobedient*] The verb should be more fully translated "I did not become disobedient." The thought goes back to the "kicking against the pricks," the opposition of previous times. That was at an end now. Jesus was "Lord," and Saul's only question "What wilt thou have me to do?"

20. *but shewed* [*R. V.* declared] The word signifies the delivery of a message. Saul was henceforth God's evangelist.

and at Jerusalem] Cp. ix. 29. Here he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, so that they went about to kill him.

and throughout all the coasts of Judæa] Of this ministration we are only told, ix. 30, that the brethren finding Saul in danger in Jerusalem, brought him to Cæsarea, and thence sent him to Tarsus. But as we see in the history of Felix (cp. xxiii. 34, note) that Cilicia was sometimes reckoned as a part of the province of Judæa, the preaching in Cilicia may be included in the expression "country of Judæa." And we may feel sure that Paul, wherever he might be, never laid aside the character which Christ's mission had imposed upon him.

and do works meet for repentance] *Rev. Ver.*, more literally and better, "doing works worthy of repentance" or "worthy of their repentance." For the works were to be a sign of their repentance and turning unto God; the means whereby the reality of their sorrow, and the earnestness of their desire, was to be shewn.

21. *For these causes*] Lit. "on account of these things" which the *R. V.* better represents by "for this cause."

the Jews caught me [*R. V.* seized me] The word implies an arrest with violence.

and went about [*R. V.* assayed] *to kill me*] St Paul combines the riot in the Temple with the subsequent plot before he was sent to Cæsarea. Or he may be alluding only to the violence by which he was nearly torn in pieces before the chief captain came to his rescue. The verb rendered "kill" indicates the laying violent hands on any one, and so favours the latter view.

22 to kill *me*. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other *things* than those which the prophets and
23 Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, *and* that he *should be* the first *that* should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

22. *Having therefore obtained help of God* [*R. V.* the help that is from God.] The "therefore" implies that against such attempts the help which alone could deliver him was divine. The word for "help" means the succour of an ally, and recalls God's promise "Surely I will be with thee."

I continue [*R. V.* stand] *unto this day*] The Apostle has in mind the many attempts to cast him down which had been made by Jews, and Gentiles too, during his missionary journeys. He has been rescued in many ways, and is still there standing safe and sound through the help which God hath sent him. He does not forget human agency, but this, whatever it was, was all sent of God.

witnessing [*R. V.* testifying] *both to small and great*] He was now before two who would be named great, and he knew that God had declared that he should testify "before kings" (ix. 15).

the prophets and Moses] i.e. the whole Old Testament Scriptures. The form of the phrase is usually "Moses and the prophets" according to the order of the O. T. books. Sometimes we have "the Law and the prophets," and once (Luke xxiv. 44) "the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms."

23. *that Christ should suffer*] *Rev. Ver.* "How that the Christ must suffer," but giving in the margin on "How that" *or* "if" *or* "whether." The Greek is the conjunction ordinarily rendered "if," and the literal meaning is "If the Christ be one who has to suffer." The original puts it as though it were a question on which there was debate among the Jews. As indeed there was. See John xii. 34. And out of the Scriptures Paul says he answered the question whether this should be so. As his answer was a positive one the sense is nearly enough represented by "that" in the A. V., but we should read "the Christ."

and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light] The *Rev. Ver.* gives a better representation of the original thus, "and how that he first *by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim*." Christ was the firstfruits of them that sleep. His resurrection was an earnest of the general resurrection. Thus life and immortality were brought to light. "Should proclaim"="is about to proclaim," for this is the gospel which is to be preached from generation to generation.

light unto the people, and to the Gentiles] The best MSS. insert "both" before "unto." The "people," i.e. of the Jews. Christ was spoken of in like terms by the aged Simeon. "A light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel." And he could say this because in Jesus he beheld God's "salvation." He could

24—32. *Interruption by Festus. Appeal to Agrippa. Consultation and decision.*

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud 24
voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth
make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble 25
Festus; but speak forth *the* words of truth and soberness.
For the king knoweth of these *things*, before whom also I 26
speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these *things*
are hidden from him; for this *thing* was not done in a

"depart in peace," being sure that "to die" was only the pledge of "to rise again."

24—32. INTERRUPTION BY FESTUS. APPEAL TO AGRIPPA. CONSULTATION AND DECISION.

24 *Festus said with a loud voice*] Probably what had last fallen from Paul seemed to him little better than lunatic ravings. The Gospel of the Cross did appear as "foolishness" to the Gentile world. And this Gospel he had just heard in all its fulness: that the Christ by suffering of death and rising to life again should be the source of true enlightenment both to Jews and Gentiles.

Paul, thou art beside thyself [*R. V.* mad]. As the same word is taken up in the following verse, it is better that it should be rendered alike in both places.

much learning doth make thee mad] Lit. (with *R. V.*) "doth turn thee to madness." But there is nothing gained by construing thus, and much is lost in English vigour. "Much learning" is literally "the many writings." As in John vii. 15, where the same word is rendered "letters," it may mean study and learning generally. But it seems better to take it of those writings (viz. the Old Testament) to which Paul had been appealing. For as a religious literature no nation, not even the polished Greeks, had anything to place in comparison with the Sacred Books of the Jews.

25. *most noble* [*R. V.* excellent] *Festus*] The same title of respect which is given to Felix (xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3). As St Chrysostom remarks the Apostle now answers with gentleness, not as to the high priest (xxiii. 3).

soberness] The word, in classical Greek, is the opposite to that "madness" unto which Festus had said Paul was turned.

26. *none of these things are hidden from him*] i.e. the history of the life and works of Jesus, of His death and resurrection, of the marvellous gifts of Pentecost, and the preaching of the Gospel since Jesus had been crucified.

for this thing was not done in a corner] Of the truth of this we can be sure from the excitement caused both in the religious and political world by the work of Jesus during his life, by the efforts put forth to stop his teaching, which culminated in a trial in which both Jewish

27 corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I
28 know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul,
29 Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as

and Roman magistrates were consulted, and by the exclamation of the Pharisees (John xii. 19) "The world is gone after him," and the declaration (Acts xvii. 6) "These that have turned the world upside down."

27. *believest thou the prophets*] Whose writings foretell these events of which I am speaking, and which have had their fulfilment in the history of Jesus of Nazareth.

I know that thou believest] The Apostle answers his own question, for he is sure that Agrippa would not have given a different answer, seeing how anxious all his family were, in spite of their relations with Rome, to be accepted of the Jewish nation. St Paul does not imply by his words any conviction about the character of Agrippa's faith in the Scriptures.

28. *Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*] *Rev. Ver.* "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian." The original is "with [*or* in] little (labour *or* time) thou art persuading me, &c." It would seem therefore that the *Rev. Ver.* represents Agrippa's words more nearly than A. V. "With little labour" or "in a little time" implies that the king despised the attempt which had been made to convince him, and mocked at the language of St Paul in so readily taking for granted that the king was in accord with him. It is as though he said "You are supposing that I accept these words of the prophets in the same sense as you do, and you are a fool for your pains, to think that with so little trouble and in so short a space you could win me over to your side. And such a side! To be a Christian." The name had, no doubt, been given, when it was first applied (Acts xi. 26), to the adherents of Jesus as a term of reproach, and it is likely that it had not yet won its way to be a name of credit, at all events among such men as Agrippa and his friends. For we have no reason to suppose that the king was influenced at all by Paul's words.

29. *both almost, and altogether*] The literal rendering of the Greek is given by the *Rev. Ver.* "whether with little or with much," and it is difficult to see how the sense of the A. V. can be extracted from the words. The Apostle takes up the jeer of the king in a serious tone, and replies: "I may have seemed to use little persuasion, and suddenly to have jumped at the conclusion that you accept the teaching of the prophets as I myself receive it; but whether it need little or much persuasion, or little or much time, my prayer to God is, for you and for all who listen to me that they may become such as I am, save as to my bonds."

were...such as I am] Better with *Rev. Ver.* "might become such as I am." Paul avoids the word "Christian," which for himself he might willingly have accepted (cp. 1 Pet. iv. 16), but which was used by the

I am, except these bonds. And when he had thus spoken, 30
the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they
that sat with them: and when they were gone aside, they 31
talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing
worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto 32
Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had
not appealed unto Cesar.

1—44. *Paul's voyage and shipwreck.*

And when it was determined that we should sail into 27
Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto
one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. And 2

king in a mocking sense, and therefore would not have made his wish seem an acceptable one. You may call me "Christian" in mockery, my joy and hope and faith in Christ are such, that I know no better prayer for any than to wish you all the like blessings.

except these bonds] From this it is clear, in spite of the leniency with which Paul had been at first treated by Felix, that either because his case was deemed more serious in consequence of his being left in prison so long, or because he was just now before the court as a prisoner, the Apostle had been put in chains.

30. *And when he had thus spoken*] The oldest MSS. omit these words.

they that sat with them] i.e. the chief captains and the principal men of Cæsarea. (See xxv. 23.) The authorities withdrew to consult upon what they had heard.

31. *they talked between themselves*] *R. V.* "they spake one to another." This is more literal and conveys better the idea that they were all of one mind about the case.

32. *might have been set at liberty*] Thus Agrippa, looking at the question from the Jewish stand-point, confirms the opinion of the Roman magistrate (cp. xxv. 25). So that St Paul was acquitted on all hands, and Festus may rightly be deemed guilty because he had driven an innocent man to appeal to a higher court, from fear that he would be delivered into the power of his enemies. But God was using human means for bringing the Apostle to Rome, and so fulfilling his servant's great desire, and in such wise that he should be heard before kings in behalf of the Gospel.

if he had not appealed] The appeal put an end to all powers of a lower court either to condemn or absolve.

XXVII. 1—44. PAUL'S VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK.

1. *they delivered Paul*] i.e. the soldiers who had the care of him did so, by order of Festus.

a centurion] This was generally the rank of the officers appointed to such a charge. Cp. xxi. 32, xxiv. 23, &c.

of Augustus' band] *Rev. Ver.* "Of the Augustan band." The

entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aristarchus, a Macedonian
3 of Thessalonica, being with us. And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto *his* friends to refresh him-

word rendered "band" might be translated "cohort" as in the margin of *R. V.*, and it is said that in the time of Octavianus Augustus there were some legions to which the title "Augustan" (Gk. *Sebastos*) was given, as being specially the Imperial troops, and that perhaps among the soldiers in Cæsarea there was a detachment of these legions. But as Cæsarea was itself called "Sebaste" it seems more likely that the soldiers were Samaritan troops belonging to Cæsarea itself. And Josephus (*Wars* ii. 12. 5) makes mention of troops which had their name, Sebasteni, from this city Cæsarea Sebaste.

2. *And entering into* (*R. V.* embarking in)] The verb is the technical term for "going on board."

Adramyttium] a seaport on the coast of that district of Asia Minor called Mysia, and in early times Æolis. It appears to have been in St Paul's time a place of considerable trade, and Pliny (v. 30) mentions it as an assize town. The reason why the Apostle and his companions embarked on board a vessel from this port was that it was probably the easiest way of getting into the line of vessels going from Asia to the West. The isle of Lesbos lay off the gulf on which Adramyttium was situated, and to which it gave name, and the town was in close connexion with Ephesus, Miletus, Pergamos and Troas, and so was a considerable centre of commerce.

we launched, meaning to sail] The best MSS. make the participle refer to the ship and not to the Apostle and his company. So read, with *Rev. Ver.* "a ship...which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea." For in a voyage of such a character they would be very likely to find, in some of the ports at which they touched, a vessel that would convey them to Italy.

Aristarchus] Mentioned before (xix. 29) as one of those whom the mob in Ephesus seized in their fury against St Paul. He went, as it seems, with the Apostle into Europe, for he is enumerated amongst those who accompanied St Paul (xx. 4) on his return. After the present notice of him, we learn nothing more of his history except that from Col. iv. 10 and Philem. 24 we can gather that he remained with the Apostle during his first Roman imprisonment.

3. *Sidon*] The well-known seaport on the coast of Phœnicia.

courteously entreated Paul] "To entreat" is in modern English only used as "to beseech" "to supplicate." In the older language it had the same sense as "to treat," "use" has now. Cp. Shaks. *Hen. VI.* (pt. 2) ii. 4. 81 "*Entreat* her not the worse, in that I pray you use her well." The *R. V.* has "treated Paul kindly."

to refresh himself] The Greek is literally "to receive attention." The Apostle no doubt knew some of the residents in Sidon, and at his

self. And when we had launched from thence, we sailed 4
under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. And when 5
we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we
came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. And there the centurion 6
found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us
therein. And when we had sailed slowly many days, and 7
scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffer-
ing us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; and 8

request the centurion allowed him, while the vessel stayed there, to enjoy their company and kind offices.

4. *And when we had launched from thence*] *R. V.* "And putting to sea from thence." "Launch" has become a little restricted in meaning in modern English, but compare, for the sense, Christ's words to Peter (Luke v. 4), "Launch out into the deep."

we sailed under Cyprus] i. e. between Cyprus and the mainland, so as to have the shelter of the island on their left to protect them from the contrary winds. *R. V.* "under the lee of Cyprus."

5. *the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia*] *R. V.*, more correctly, "the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia." These two countries formed the coast of Asia Minor in that portion which is opposite Cyprus.

Myra] Lies about 20 stadia (2½ miles) from the coast on the river Andriacus.

6. *a ship of Alexandria*] They found a means of transport into Italy sooner perhaps than they had expected. It may be that the same strong contrary winds from the west which had altered already the course of their voyage from Sidon, had carried this vessel across the Mediterranean to the Asiatic coast. Myra was certainly out of the way for persons sailing from N. Africa to Italy.

7. *sailed slowly many days*] Kept back by the same head-winds.

and scarce were come over against Cnidus] The word rendered "scarce" would be better "with difficulty." They had been forced to hug the coast all the way from Myra, and when off Cnidus they were only opposite to the S.W. extremity of Asia Minor. Cnidus was, as its remains demonstrate, a famous seaport town in ancient times, and we find that Jews dwelt there in the days of the Maccabees (1 Macc. xv. 23). It was a notable seat of the worship of Aphrodité.

the wind not suffering us] Better, with *R.V.*, "not further suffering us," i.e. not allowing us to make further progress.

under Crete] *Rev. Ver.*, "under the lee of Crete." See above on verse 4. Crete is the modern island of *Candia*. Salmone was the eastern extremity of the island, off which when they came they sheltered themselves under the island, and sailed to the south of it, to avoid the wind as much as might be.

8. *and hardly passing it*] "Hardly" is in the original the same word which was rendered "scarce" in the previous verse. Read (with

hardly passing it, came unto a place *which is* called The
9 fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city *of* Lasea. Now
when much time was spent, and when sailing was now
dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul
10 admonished *them*, and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that
this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of
11 the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the

R. V.) "with difficulty coasting along it." The verb represents the voyage as made by keeping close in to the southern shores of the island.

came unto a place] i.e. on the coast of Crete. The Gk. gives (as *R. V.*) "a certain place."

which is called The fair havens] *R. V.* "called Fair Havens." This place, though mentioned nowhere else in literature, yet is known by the same name still. It is on the south of Crete, four or five miles east of Cape Matala, which is the largest headland on that side of the island.

Lasea] This city has also been identified very recently. Its ruins were discovered in 1856, a few miles east of Fair Havens. See Smith's *Voyage and Shipwreck of St Paul*, App. III. pp. 262, 263.

9. *Now when much time was spent*] Waiting for a change of wind, and in debate on what course should next be taken.

and when sailing (*R. V.* and the voyage) *was now dangerous*] It had come to be dangerous by the late season of the year. In St Paul's day navigation both among the Jews and other nations was only attempted for a limited portion of the year.

because the fast was now already past] The fast here meant is that on the great Day of Atonement, which falls on the tenth day of Tishri, the seventh month of the Jewish year. This corresponds to a part of September and October of our calendar. So that a stormy season was to be expected.

10. *Sirs, I perceive that this* (*R. V.* the) *voyage will be with hurt and much damage* (*R. V.* injury and much loss)]. Evidently the character of the Apostle had won him the regard and respect of those in charge of the vessel as well as of the centurion. He must have had some experience of sailing in the Mediterranean, and so was fitted to speak on the question which was now being debated. We should bear in mind too that he had seen more of perils by sea already than we gather from the Acts. For some time before this voyage to Rome, he wrote to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xi. 25), "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep."

The verb rendered "I perceive" implies the results of observation, and does not refer to any supernatural communication which the Apostle had received. This is clear from the end of the verse where St Paul speaks of hurt to the lives of those on board, which did not come to pass (verse 44).

centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those *things* which were spoken by Paul. And 12
because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, *and there* to winter; *which is* a haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west. And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that 13
they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed

11. *the centurion believed* (*R. V.* gave more heed to)] As the centurion was in charge of prisoners for the Imperial tribunal, his wish would be much regarded by both owner and sailing-master. And it was natural when they recommended the attempt to proceed that he should not listen to Paul's advice and remain where they were.

the master] i. e. the sailing-master. The original means "pilot," which term must here be understood of that officer who had charge of the navigation.

the owner of the ship] Who was probably owner of the cargo too, and if, as is most likely, this was corn, he would be sailing with it, that he might dispose of it to the best advantage when they reached Italy.

12. *not commodious to winter in*] And this was what they most likely would have to do, wherever they stopped, as the season for sailing was nearly over.

to depart thence also] The oldest MSS. do not represent the last word. (*R. V.* "to put to sea from thence)." The word is the technical term, and not the ordinary word for "depart."

they might attain to Phenice] (*R. V.* "they could reach Phœnix.") Phœnix is no doubt the correct orthography of the name. The place is mentioned both by Strabo and Ptolemy, and has been identified with the modern port of Lutro (Spratt's *Crete* ii. 250 seqq.).

and lieth toward the south west and north west] (*R. V.* looking north-east and south-east) The original is "looking down the south-west wind and down the north-west wind." To look down a wind is to look in the direction in which it blows. So as a south-west wind would blow towards N.E., the *Rev. Ver.* appears to give the correct sense, and the haven of Lutro answers these conditions, being open towards the east.

13. *the south wind blew softly*] The storm appeared to have in some degree abated, and the change of wind must have been very complete, for (see verses 7, 8) they had previously sailed under the lee of Crete to get shelter from the *north* wind.

loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete] (*R. V.* "They weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore)." The word for "close in shore" is *asson*, and it has been by some taken for a proper name and endeavours been made to discover traces of some place so named in Crete. But though the translation "when they had loosed from Assos" is as old as the Vulgate, there can be little doubt that the

14 close by Crete. But not long after there arose against it a
15 tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when the ship
was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her*
16 drive. And running under a certain island *which is* called

Greek word is really the comparative degree of an adverb signifying "near." So it literally means "nearer," and is probably used to indicate that the coasting voyage now being made was one in which the coast was hugged more closely than usual. This is intended by *R. V.* "close in shore."

14. *there arose against it*] The word "it" must mean the last-mentioned subject, the island Crete. Thus the A. V. would state that the south wind, which already had begun to blow, became tempestuous, and dashed against the island. But if so, it must have carried the vessel with it. Whereas, what really happened was that they were driven southward to the island of Clauda. It is therefore better to take the preposition=*down from*, a sense which it often has in such a construction, than to give the verb the more literal meaning from the margin of A. V., and to construe (with *R. V.*) "there beat down from it, &c." The wind suddenly changed from south to north, and coming over the land carried the vessel southward away from Crete. Such changes are not unusual in the Mediterranean (Smith's *Voyage of St Paul*, p. 99).

a tempestuous wind] The adjective is one from which the word "typhoon" is derived.

called Euroclydon] (*R. V.* "which is called Euraquilo"). This reading of *R. V.* is supported by the oldest MSS., and has the Vulgate "Euroaquilo" in its favour, and it exactly describes the wind which would carry the vessel in the direction indicated. It is known in Greek by the name "Cœcias" and is a north-east wind. Some have thought that the reading of the A. V., which has the support of many MSS., arose from a corruption in the mouths of sailors. For the word "Euraquilo" is a hybrid, the first portion being Greek, the latter Latin. The form in the *Text Rec.* gives it a look of being all Greek, and the words "which is called" seem to intimate that the name was one known to the sailors, rather than a word of general use. Whereas "Euraquilo" would have needed no such introductory expression, but have been understood at once by its etymology.

15. *and could not bear up into the wind*] (*R. V.* "face the wind"). This comes nearer to the original, which is literally "to look the wind in the eye."

we let her drive] (*R. V.* "we gave way *to it*, and were driven.) The literal rendering is "having given way we were driven." The general usage of the verb in the sense of "yielding to superior force" makes it most probable that the meaning is "we yielded to the wind." The A. V. makes the sense "we yielded the vessel up."

16. *And running under a certain island which is called Clauda*] (*R. V.* And running under the lee of a small island, called Cauda")

Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: which 17
when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the
ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands,
strake sail, and so were driven. And we being exceedingly 18
tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they lightened the ship;

For the verb cp. above on verses 4 and 7. The word for "island" is here in the original a diminutive form, hence "small island." The name "Cauda" which has the best MS. support agrees well with the form which the name has assumed in modern times, "Gozzo" and "Gaudo." But the form in A.V. is warranted by the orthography of Ptolemy (Claudos) and Pliny (Glaudos).

we had much work to come by the boat] This is most idiomatic old English, but is changed in *R.V.* into "we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat." The boats in old times were not as in modern ships made fast round about the vessel, but were carried on in tow. In stormy weather, there was of course much danger that the boat would be washed away. This was the case here, and as soon as ever they had gained the shelter of the island, they set about making sure of its safety by hauling it on board, but this they were not able to do without much difficulty, probably because it had been already filled with water.

17. *which when they had taken up*] [*R.V.* "and when they had hoisted it up"]. The sense of the verb is thus fully brought out, as it indicates the labour which the work required.

helps] These were strong cables, which were drawn several times round the hulls of vessels, to help in keeping the timbers from parting. The technical term for the operation is "to frap" a vessel, and it is only in modern times that the process has been abandoned.

should fall into the quicksands] [*R.V.* "lest they should be cast upon the Syrtis"]. The Syrtis Major and Syrtis Minor are two quicksands on the north coast of Africa, of which the Syrtis Major lies most to the east, between Tripoli and Barca, and was the shoal on to which the sailors at this time were afraid of being driven.

strake sail] [*R.V.* "lowered the gear"] The noun is a very general one, signifying "tackling" or "implements" of any kind. What was done was to lower everything from aloft that could be dispensed with. They could not have struck sail, because to do so would be to give up all the chance which remained of using the wind to avoid the Syrtis, which was what they desired to do.

18. *And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest*] Better, with *R.V.* "and we laboured exceedingly with the storm." The storm waxed in violence.

the next day they lightened the ship] This is not as precise as the original. Read "they set about throwing the cargo overboard." The verb is an imperfect, and the noun is used in classical Greek for "a cargo cast forth." The ship was probably carrying corn from Alexandria to Italy, and if so the load would be a heavy one and its removal a great relief to the struggling vessel. On the African supply of corn to Italy cp. Juv. *Sat.* v. 118 seqq.

19 and the third *day* we cast *out* with our own hands the tackling
20 of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days
appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope that we
21 should be saved was then taken away. But after long
abstinence Paul stood *forth* in the midst of them, and said,
Sirs, *ye* should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed
22 from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And
now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no
23 loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there

19. *we cast out with our own hands*] The oldest MSS., with *R.V.* read "They cast out with their &c." which is much more likely than that the writer of the narrative, even if he were a fellow-traveller with St Paul in this voyage, was employed in such a work, which is pre-eminently that which the sailors alone would undertake.

the tackling] (*Gk.* furniture). The word is closely akin to that used in verse 17 for "gear." As that signified all that could be spared from aloft, so this seems to mean all that could be removed from the deck or the hull of the vessel.

20. *in many days appeared*] [*R.V.* shone upon us for many days]. This does not imply a continuous darkness like night, but that the mist and spray made the whole sky obscure both by day and night. In such a state of things we can understand how hopeless seemed the case of the Apostle and his fellows. They were at the mercy of the storm, and could neither know the direction in which they were carried, nor see if they were nearing any danger.

21. *But after long abstinence*] As this sentence stands in A.V. it seems to indicate that the Apostle had been observing this long abstinence before he spake to his companions. The Gk. means that everybody on board had been without food for a long time. Read (with *R.V.*) "when they had been long without food." This was in consequence of the excitement which made it impossible to eat, as well as the condition of the vessel which made the preparation of food very difficult. They had been living on anything that happened to be attainable, and that had been very little.

and not have loosed [*R.V.* set sail] *from Crete*] His exhortation had been that they should stay at Fair Havens, even though it was not so very commodious as a harbour.

and to have gained [gotten *R.V.*] *this harm* [injury *R.V.*] *and loss*] "To gain a loss" is a Greek, though not an English expression, and signifies "to prevent the loss by avoiding the danger." The negative of the previous clause must not therefore be taken with this clause too, but the whole read as meaning "ye would not have set sail from Crete, and so would have escaped (been the gainers in respect of) this harm and loss from which ye now suffer."

22. *And now*] i.e. though my advice was formerly rejected I offer it again.

stood by me this night *the* angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought 24
before Cesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I be- 25
lieve God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit 26
we must be cast upon a certain island.

But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were 27
driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen

there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship] *R.V.* "no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship." This is more literal, but does not alter the sense. The Apostle now speaks in the confidence of a revelation. Formerly (verse 10) he had reasoned from the probabilities of the case.

23. *the angel of God*] [*R.V.* an angel of the God]. In speaking to heathens this would be the sense which the Apostle designed to convey. They had their own gods. But St Paul stood in a different relation to his God from any which they would acknowledge towards their divinities. To him God was a Father, and therefore all obedience and service were His due. Cp. the language of Jonah when he was among the heathen sailors. (Jonah i. 9.)

24. *thou must be brought* [*R.V.* stand] *before Cesar*] i.e. "and that this may come to pass, thou shalt be saved from the present danger."

God hath given [*R.V.* granted] *thee*] This must be understood as in answer to prayer on the part of St Paul. In the midst of such peril, though no mention is made of the fact, we cannot doubt that the Apostle cried unto the Lord in his distress, and the gracious answer was vouchsafed that all should be preserved. It is not with any thought of boastfulness that he speaks thus to the heathen captain and centurion. All the praise is ascribed to God, and thus the heathen would learn that St Paul had God very near unto him.

25. *for I believe God*] And he implies "I would have you do so too." In the midst of danger, few things could be more inspiriting than such an address. And by this time all in the ship must have learnt that they had no common prisoner in the Jew who had appealed from his own people to the Roman Emperor.

26. *upon a certain island*] Hence it appears that in the vision some details of the manner of their preservation had been made known to St Paul by the divine messenger.

27. *the fourteenth night*] i.e. from the time of their sailing away from Fair Havens. Since that time they had been constantly driven to and fro.

in Adria] [*R.V.* in *the sea of* Adria]. That part of the Mediterranean which lies between Greece, Italy and Africa is so called. The name embraced a much wider extent of sea than the present Gulf of Venice, which is called "the Adriatic." Cf. Strabo, II. 123.

the shipmen deemed] [*R.V.* surmised]. Their knowledge of the sea would enable them to form an opinion from things which others would

deemed that they drew near to some country; and sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the

hardly notice, some alteration in the currents or the different character and sounds of the waves, dashed as they would be against the land.

28. *and sounded*] In ancient times, this must have been the only means of feeling their way in dark and stormy weather. The lead must have been in constant use.

found it twenty fathoms] The original has no word for "it," which is therefore omitted by *R.V.* What is meant is "they found twenty fathoms' depth of water." The same omission is found at the end of the verse also.

and when they had gone a little further] The verb has no sense of "going," but only implies that they allowed an interval to elapse. The movement of the vessel meanwhile is of course understood, but the simpler rendering of the *R.V.* "after a little space" is to be preferred.

fifteen fathoms] So rapid a decrease in the depth of the water shewed them that they would soon be ashore.

29. *lest we should have fallen upon rocks*] [*R.V.* should be cast ashore on rocky ground]. That rocks were near was evident from the dashing of the waves. But the morning, even with the faint light which appeared through the dark clouds, might enable them to make for a part where the coast was not so full of danger.

out of the stern] Thus trying as best they might to keep the head of the vessel towards the land and yet let her come no nearer to it, until they could make out what it was like.

wished for the day] Or the verb may be rendered "prayed." The similarity of the circumstances to those in Jonah's voyage would thus be made still greater, for then the heathen sailors prayed to their own gods.

30. *were about to flee*] The Greek is better represented by the *R.V.* "were seeking to flee." They had hit upon a device which they thought would enable them to have the first chance for safety and now they set about to carry it out. Everybody would agree that it was the most important matter at the moment to hold the ship in her position. So they professed to be anxious to make her secure fore as well as aft, and to lay out anchors from the foreship. For doing this they made out that the boat must be lowered from the deck, and that having been done, they intended to avail themselves of it and to row towards the shore. Paul's interference stopped them.

soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her 32
fall off. And while the day was coming on, Paul besought 33
them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this 34
is for your health: for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he 35
took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of *them*

31. *Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers*] These would probably be able to stop the intended desertion better than the captain of the vessel. At all events they were strong enough in numbers to take the matter into their own hands, and cut the boat adrift. It seems too (from verse 11) that the centurion had much to do with the direction of the ship. Probably he had chartered her for the conveyance of his prisoners and so had the right to be consulted on all that was done.

Except these abide in the ship] We see from this that every human effort was still to be made, although God had revealed to Paul that they should all be saved. If the sailors had left, the ignorance of the soldiers and other passengers would not have availed to save them at such a time. The skill of the sailors was to be exerted to carry out what God had promised.

32. *cut off* [*R.V.* away] *the ropes of the boat*] i.e. cut asunder the ropes which attached the boat to the ship.

33. *while the day was coming on*] Before it was light enough to see what had best be done. Here again we may notice how every means was to be employed for safety. Paul urges them to take now a proper meal that when the time for work arrives they may be in a condition to undertake it. The remaining clauses of the verse are not to be understood as implying that the fast had been entire for so long a time. Such a thing is impossible. But what the Apostle means is that the crew and passengers had taken during all that time no regular food, only snatching a morsel now and then when they were able, and that of something which had not been prepared.

34. *to take some meat*] "Meat" in the older English was used for any kind of food, which is what the Greek signifies, "nourishment." Therefore in these verses the *R.V.* has everywhere "food."

this is for your health] [*R. V.* safety.] The *R. V.* is the better rendering of the Greek, and agrees with what has been said on verse 32. The men when they had eaten would be able to do more towards their own preservation.

there shall not a hair fall, &c.] The best MSS. have "perish" instead of "fall," and so *R. V.* The phrase is a proverbial one to express complete deliverance. Cp. 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; 1 Kings i. 52; Luke xxi. 18.

35. *gave thanks to God*] As he had advised, so he set the example

36 all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. Then
were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.
37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore *and*
38 sixteen souls. And when they had eaten enough, they
lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.
39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they

of taking food. But he did more than this. He made an Eucharist of this meal. In the sight of the heathen soldiers and sailors, he brake the bread in solemn thanksgiving, and thus converted the whole into a religious act, which can hardly have been without its influence on the minds of some, at all events, of those who had heard St Paul's previous words about the revelation which God had made to him.

36. *all of good cheer*] Paul's hopeful spirit had breathed hope into the whole company, and doubtless the religious character infused into the meal was not without a calming influence.

took some meat] The "some" of the A. V. seems warranted by the genitive case in the original, and is therefore to be preferred to the "took food" of the *R. V.*

37. *two hundred threescore and sixteen*] As we do not know the number of prisoners and soldiers, it is impossible to form any conclusion about the manning of such a ship as this. The number here mentioned is very large, and we cannot suppose that a merchantman from Alexandria to Rome would carry a very large crew. But to accept the reading (supported by very little authority) which makes the whole company "about threescore and sixteen" has equal difficulty on the other side, and the way in which it arose can be easily explained from the use of letters for numerals among the Greeks. A vessel which could have four anchors cast from the stern, and still have more to spare for the foreship, must have been of large size and have needed many hands. The occasion of the numbering was probably the near expectation of coming ashore, and so it was needful to have all told, for the captain, in respect of the crew, and for the centurion, that of his prisoners and soldiers none might be allowed to escape or be missing. The mention of the number at this point of the history is one of the many very natural features of the narrative.

38. *And when they had eaten enough*] *Gk.* "And having been satisfied with food." When they had satisfied their present need, there was no use in trying to save more of the food which they had. So they set about lightening the ship. This is implied by the tense of the verb, and the next clause tells us the way they did it. They cast into the sea the corn which had been the first cargo of the vessel from Alexandria. No doubt this was the heaviest part of the freight, and would relieve the vessel greatly.

39. *they knew not the land*] We are not from this to suppose that none of the sailors were acquainted with the island of Malta, but that the point of the land close to which they were was unrecognised by them. When they were close in shore, and amid stormy weather, this could

discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. And 40
when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. And 41
falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship

very well happen, as they were a long way distant from the usual harbour.

but they discovered a certain creek with a shore] Better (with *R. V.*) "they perceived a certain bay with a beach." The word is used to signify such a sandy beach as might allow a ship to be run aground upon it without the danger of her immediately coming to pieces.

into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship] Better (with *R. V.*) "and they took counsel whether they could drive the ship upon it," i.e. they saw that the beach was such that they had a chance of landing there, and they discussed the best way of doing so, in their present maimed condition.

40. *And when they had taken up the anchors*] The verb in the original implies that they cast loose all the anchors round about the stern of the vessel where they had laid them out. So the *R. V.* rightly gives "And casting off the anchors." When they had thrown overboard a load of corn, they would have no wish to encumber themselves with the weight of the anchors or to take the trouble of hauling them up.

they committed themselves unto the sea] The italics of the A. V. shew that "themselves" is unrepresented in the original. It is far better to refer the verb to the anchors already mentioned, and render (with *R. V.*) "they left them in the sea."

and loosed the rudder bands] The original has an adverb which is feebly represented by the conjunction of the A. V. Read (as *R. V.*) "at the same time loosing," &c. The rudders, of which the ancient ships had two, had been made fast, and raised out of the water, when the anchors were laid out in the stern. Now that an attempt is to be made to steer the ship toward the beach they are let down again into the water.

and hoised up the mainsail] The Gk. word "artemon" here used, was in old times the name given to the "foresail" of the vessel, and so it should be rendered here. Cognate words are now employed for the larger sails of vessels in the Mediterranean, but the "foresail" was all they here had left.

toward shore] i.e. toward this beach, which seemed a suitable place where they might try to land.

41. *And falling into a place where two seas met*] The conjunction should here be rendered adversatively "But." The verse goes on to describe some circumstances which defeated the intention of the sailors. Read "But lighting upon a place, &c." This is one of the features of the narrative by which the locality can almost certainly be identified. The little island of Salmonetta forms with the Maltese coast near St

aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence
42 of the waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any *of them* should swim out, and escape.
43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim
44 should cast *themselves* first into *the sea*, and get to land: and

Paul's Bay exactly such a position as is here described. From the sea at a little distance, it appears as though the land were all continuous, and the current between the island and the mainland is only discovered on a nearer approach. This current by its deposits has raised a mud-bank where its force is broken by the opposing sea, and into this bank, just at the place where the current meets the sea-waves, was the ship driven, the force of the water preventing the vessel from reaching the beach just beyond. So it came to pass that though they got much nearer to the shore than at first, yet after all they had to swim for their lives.

but the hinder part was broken] Read (as *R. V.*) "the stern began to break up." The verb in the orginal expresses an incomplete and gradual process. When the foreship was immoveable, the stern would also be held fast, and so be acted on by the waves with great violence and begin to go to pieces.

with the violence of the waves] The best MSS. do not represent the last three words. Of course they are to be understood, if they be not there.

42. *to kill the prisoners*] This was the advice of the soldiers because, by the Roman law, they were answerable with their own lives for the prisoners placed under their charge.

43. *But the centurion, willing to save*] The Gk. word indicates an active desire, and not a mere willingness. Read (with *R. V.*) "desiring to save." The centurion could not fail to feel that it was to the Apostle that the safety of the whole party was due, and he could hardly help feeling admiration for the prisoner, after all he had seen of him. From the first (see verse 3) he had been well disposed toward Paul, and the after events would not have lessened his regard. So to save him, he stops the design of his men, and saves the whole number of the prisoners.

kept them] Better, "hindered them" or (with *R. V.*) "stayed them." The verb is a forcible word, and shews that the centurion was in full command of his men, and had not in the confusion lost his thoughtfulness and presence of mind.

they which could swim] This was the wisest course to adopt Thus there would be a body ready on the shore to help those who only could float thither by the aid of something to which they were clinging. As St Paul had already been thrice shipwrecked and had been in the deep a night and a day (2 Cor. xi. 25) we may be sure that he was among those who were told off to swim ashore.

the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that *they* escaped all safe to land.

1—10. *The shipwrecked company hospitably entertained in Malta. Paul, bitten by a viper, feels no hurt. Cure of the father of the chief magistrate.*

And when they were escaped, then they knew that the 28
island was called Melita. And the barbarous people shewed 2

should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land] [*R.V.* "*should cast themselves overboard and get first to the land*"] What is represented in the A.V., by "into the sea" is merely the preposition compounded with the verb "to cast." This the *R.V.* represents by "overboard," and so brings the word "first" into its proper and emphatic position. The swimmers were to get into safety first of all, that then they might be in readiness to succour those who drifted to the land on the floating spars and planks.

44. *and the rest*] The nominative is here left pendent, both in the original and the translation. We supply readily in thought the needful words "should get to the land."

some on boards [*R.V.* planks] *and some on broken pieces of* [*R.V.* other things from] *the ship*] The *R.V.* is the closest rendering of the Greek, but the A. V. gives the sense. The things on which they were saved were pieces which on the stranding of the vessel would be broken away from the main timbers. Everything that was needless to be kept on board they had already thrown over, and so we cannot think here of loose furniture of the vessel, but only of the framework itself.

escaped all safe] [*R.V.* all escaped safe]. The transposition of *R.V.* makes the emphasis clear. "All safe" might be read as if it meant "quite safe," and "all" were merely an adverb qualifying the adjective.

XXVIII. 1—10. THE SHIPWRECKED COMPANY HOSPITABLY ENTERTAINED IN MALTA. PAUL, BITTEN BY A VIPER, FEELS NO HURT. CURE OF THE FATHER OF THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE.

1. *And when they were escaped*] The oldest MSS. give the first person plural in this verse. Render (with *R.V.*) "when we were...we knew."

Melita] They would at once learn what the land was from the natives whom they found on the shore. Tradition has from the earliest times identified Melita with the modern Malta. But Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*de Adm. Imp.* p. 36) and others after him have attempted to shew that *Meleda*, a small island in the Adriatic Sea, not far from the coast of Illyria, was the scene of the shipwreck. They have supported this opinion by confining the sense of Adria (xxvii. 27) to the

us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of
3 the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat,

modern Adriatic Sea, by their explanation of "barbarians" in the next verse of this chapter, and by the absence of vipers at the present time from the island of Malta. But the latter circumstance is not without a parallel. The advance of cultivation and alteration of temperature have destroyed poisonous beasts out of other districts besides Malta, and the two first arguments are founded on mistakes. Moreover it is hardly possible to conceive that a ship should be driven for fourteen days in the Adriatic without going ashore, and the direction in which they sailed after finding a fresh vessel (xxviii. 11, 12) is also completely opposed to the idea that they were wrecked in the Gulf of Venice.

2. *And the barbarous people*] [*R.V.* barbarians] The word is used in the original, as it was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Those who did not speak their language were to them always "barbarians" not necessarily in our modern sense but as strange and foreign folks. The language spoken in Malta was probably a Phœnician dialect, as the island had received most of its inhabitants from Carthage, but had come under Roman rule in the second Punic war (Livy, XXI. 51).

shewed us no little [*R. V.* no common] *kindness*] The same Greek expression is used xix. 11 of St Paul's miracles. There both versions give "special" as the rendering. And we might here read "shewed us especial kindness."

received us every one] [*R. V.* all] i.e. took us under their care. At first of course the hospitality would be shewn by kind treatment on the beach, evidenced by their lighting a fire. Afterwards, as the stay was of three months' duration, the sailors and prisoners would find quarters in the dwellings of the natives. Paul, the centurion, and some others were received into the house of the chief magistrate. The rain continued after they had got ashore, and the storm had so lowered the temperature that the first thing to be done was to make a large fire.

3. *And* [*R. V.* But] *when Paul had gathered*] This is only another sign of the active spirit of the Apostle. Whatever was to be done, if he were able to take a part in it, he was never wanting, whether it was in counselling about a difficulty, in comforting under danger, or helping by bodily labour to relieve the general distress.

a bundle of sticks] The word in the original would apply very fitly to the brushwood and furze which is said to be the only material growing near St Paul's Bay of which a fire could be made.

there came a viper] Dr Farrar (*Life of St Paul*, II. 384, note) has noticed that the viper has disappeared from the isle of Arran, as it is now said to have done from Malta.

out of the heat] [*R.V.* by reason of the heat] The original has the preposition usually rendered "from." The *R.V.* gives the better explanation of its meaning here. The creature had been numbed by

and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw 4
the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among
themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though
he hath escaped the sea, yet Vengeance suffereth not to live.
And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. 5
Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or 6
fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a
great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed
their minds, and said that he was a god. In the same 7
quarters were possessions of the chief *man* of the island,

the cold, and feeling the sudden warmth, woke up and sprang away from it.

4. *saw the venomous beast*] There is nothing in the Greek to represent "venomous," though it was because the inhabitants knew that such was its character that they were so astonished at what happened.

Vengeance suffereth not to live] [*R. V.* "Justice hath not suffered to live"] This is an instance in which the A.V. expresses far more truly than the *R. V.* the sense of the Greek. The indefinite meaning of the Greek aorist is often more like what we call the English present than the perfect. "I eat" does not necessarily mean "I am eating" and covers more time than "I have eaten." It may be present, but it can refer both to past and future time. What the people meant to say was that Justice, as her wont is, is finding out the wrong-doer.

5. *And* [*R. V.* Howbeit] *he shook off the beast*] The rendering of the particles by the *R. V.* is to be preferred. The verb is the same which is used (Luke ix. 5) of shaking off dust from the feet. The idea conveyed is that Paul was quite composed in what he did, and that the beast was no cause of alarm to him.

6. *Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen*] Better (with *R.V.*) "But they expected that he would have swollen." Such being the usual effect of the viper's bite, and making itself apparent in a very short time.

but after they had looked a great while] [*R. V.* "but when they were long in expectation."] The verb is the same as in the first clause of the verse, and does not express merely the gazing upon Paul, but the thought in their minds of what was to come. The pluperfect of the A.V. is the better English. So read "when they had been long in expectation."

saw no harm] [*R.V.* "beheld nothing amiss."] The adjective is the same which is used, Luke xxiii. 41, "This man hath done nothing *amiss*," and can be applied to anything abnormal, whether it be as there a breach of a law, or as here a change of condition.

and said that he was a god] Compare the conduct of the Lycaonians in Lystra (xiv. 11 seqq.), whose behaviour afterwards shews that the opinion quickly formed was unstable, and liable to change as suddenly as it came.

7. *In the same quarters were possessions of* &c.] The A.V. omits

whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged *us*
8 three days courteously. And it came to pass, that the
father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flixe:
to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid *his* hands on
9 him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also,
which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed:
10 who also honoured us with many honours; and when we

the conjunction, and the indefinite word "possessions" is improved on by *R.V.* "Now in the neighbourhood of that place were lands belonging to, &c." The nearest place to what is believed to have been the scene of the wreck is the town now called *Alta Vecchia*.

the chief man of the island] The Greek word is "Protos," which is known from inscriptions (see Bochart, *Geogr.* II. 1. 26) to have been the official title of the governor of Melita. The island of Melita belonged to the province of the Sicilian Prætor (Cicero, *Verr.* IV. 18), whose legate Publius probably was. Tradition makes him become bishop of Malta.

who received us] This was only natural in the Roman official, for Paul was under the charge of a Roman officer, and had appealed for hearing to the Roman Emperor.

and lodged [*R.V.* entertained] *us three days*] This was until arrangements could be made for a more permanent dwelling-place. As they must remain in the island through the stormy weather of winter, before they could start again, it would be needful to provide them with settled quarters. They could not be guests for the whole three months.

8. *And it came to pass, that*] [*R.V.* "and it was so, that"]. The *R.V.* is the better modern rendering. The expression means "It happened that, &c.," not that after the arrival of St Paul the father fell ill, which might be taken as the meaning of the A.V.

of a fever and of a bloody flixe] [*R.V.* "of fever and dysentery"]. The words are technical such as a physician, as St Luke is reputed to have been, would be likely to use in describing the disease. The first, which is in the plural number, implies the *fits of fever* which occur at intervals in such diseases as ague.

9. *others also*] [*R.V.* the rest also] The latter rendering is to be preferred. It was not a few who came, but during the three months of their stay all the others who were in sickness and heard of what had been done for the father of the chief magistrate (and it was sure to be widely noised abroad) came to be cured.

who also honoured us] i.e. the whole people upon whom these benefits had been conferred honoured Paul and for his sake the rest of the party.

with many honours] No doubt these included gifts of money and such things as would be needed by travellers who had lost everything in the shipwreck: but to restrict the word to the sense of "honorarium" or fee, such as might be paid to a physician, is to narrow the meaning needlessly, and to put a construction on the proceeding which it cannot

departed, they laded *us* with such *things* as were necessary.

11—16. *The voyage from Malta and the arrival in Rome.*

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, *whose* sign *was* Castor and Pollux. 12 And landing at Syracuse, we tarried

bear. The Apostle who prayed and laid his hands on the sick and healed them was not the sort of person to whom they would offer money as a fee.

and when we departed] [*R. V.* sailed] This is better, for the word is one constantly used of putting out to sea, and not of any ordinary departure by other modes of travel.

they laded us with such things as were necessary] [*R. V.* "they put on board such things as we needed"]. The bounty must have been large if we consider the number of those for whom it was given. But Publius would set the example and others would not be slow to follow it.

11—16. THE VOYAGE FROM MALTA AND THE ARRIVAL IN ROME.

11. *And after three months*] The proper season for sailing having again come round, now that the winter was over.

we departed] [*R. V.* set sail]. The verb is the same as in the preceding verse.

in a ship of Alexandria] Another vessel employed in the same trade probably as that in which (xxviii. 6) they had embarked at Myra, and suffered so many perils.

which had wintered in the isle] Having got so far on the voyage out before the stormy weather came on. As the harbour was then where it now is, the ship had wintered in what is now Valetta.

whose sign was Castor and Pollux] [*R. V.* the Twin Brothers]. The Greek is Dioscuri, the name given to Jupiter's two sons born of Leda, who, when they were translated to the sky, became a constellation of special favour towards sailors. Horace speaks of them as "lucida sidera" (*Od.* 1. 3. 2), where he describes their beneficent influence on the ocean. By "sign" is meant what we now call "figure-head," only that the ancient ships had such signs both at stem and stern, and often the figure was that of some divinity.

If for no other reason than the description of the vessel in which the further journey was performed we cannot accept the theory that the wreck took place in the Adriatic sea. It would be hard to conceive of a vessel from Alexandria, which had stopped on its voyage to Italy to avoid the storms of winter, being found so far out of its course as Meleda in the Adriatic.

12. *And landing* [*R. V.* touching] *at Syracuse*] The vessel takes the regular road, sailing north from Valetta to Sicily. Syracuse was one of the chief towns of Sicily lying on the south-eastern extremity,

13 *there* three days. And from thence we fet a compass, and
came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew,
14 and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found
brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days:

and was famous in classical history as the scene of many of the disasters of the Athenian fleet and army in their expedition to Sicily during the Peloponnesian war.

13. *we fet a compass*] [*R.V.* "made a circuit"] The old English phrase of the A.V. is not uncommon, cp. 2 Sam. v. 23; 2 Kings iii. 9. They made this winding course because the favourable wind, for which they had probably been waiting during the three days' stay at Syracuse, did not come. "Fet" is the old preterite of "fetch" and is found often in the version of 1611, but has been changed by modern printers.

came to [*R.V.* arrived at] *Rhegium*] The modern *Reggio* situated at the southern point of Italy, on the straits of Messina. At this place Caligula designed to construct a harbour for these corn ships coming from Egypt to Italy, but his intention was never carried out.

the south wind blew] Better (with *R.V.*) "a south wind sprang up." Thus by a change of wind they were able to go speedily forward, instead of tacking as they had been obliged to do from Syracuse to Rhegium.

to Puteoli] This is the modern *Pozzuoli*, near Naples. In St Paul's day it was a principal port of Rome, and to it came most of the corn supply from Egypt.

14. *where we found brethren*] i.e. there was a Christian Church established in Puteoli, and it was to such a degree well known, that the Apostle on his arrival at once learnt of its existence. From this we may gather that the Christians in Italy had already spread to a considerable extent, and hence it seems very probable that Christianity had been carried into that country from Jerusalem soon after the first Pentecostal preaching, at which time Roman visitors were present in the Holy City. Of course in such a place as Puteoli the Jews were likely to congregate, for the sake of trade, more than in many other places of Italy, and from their body the earliest converts to Christianity must have been made. But that, without any previous recorded visit of an Apostle, there should already be in Puteoli a numerous band of Christians is evidence of the zeal with which the new faith was being propagated. For it was now only about 28 years since the death of Jesus.

and were desired] [*R.V.* intreated]. The stronger word represents the original better. It has generally been thought that the duration of this stay was arranged so that the Apostle might be present with the Church in Puteoli at least over one Lord's day. Thus the Christian congregation would be able to gather in its entirety, and to hear from the lips of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, the Gospel for which he was now "an ambassador in bonds." We do not know whether any circumstances occurred to detain Julius in Puteoli, but if it were not so,

and so we went toward Rome. And from thence, when the 15
brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii
forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he

it is a token of the great influence which St Paul had obtained over the centurion, that he was permitted to stay such a long time with his Christian friends, when the capital was so near at hand.

and so we went toward Rome] The Greek is more nearly represented by the *R. V.* "and so we came to Rome." The narrative at first speaks of the completed voyage, and then in verse 15 mention is made of some details which relate to the short land journey from Puteoli to the capital.

15. *when the brethren heard of us*] Between Puteoli and Rome there was constant communication, and the seven days of the Apostle's sojourn in the port were amply sufficient to make the whole Christian body in Rome aware of his arrival in Italy and of the time when he would set out towards the city.

they came to meet us] If it were quite certain that the sixteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans was part of the letter which was sent to that Church we might make sure of the names of some who would be of the party which started from Rome to welcome St Paul on his arrival in Italy. Aquila and Priscilla, Epænetus; Andronicus and Junias, who are both spoken of as having been formerly fellow-prisoners with the Apostle; Rufus, Herodion and Apelles, who are mentioned there in terms of the greatest affection, could hardly have failed to be among the company at Appii Forum. But the whole closing chapter of the Epistle to the Romans appears to apply better to some Asiatic Church, probably Ephesus, than to Rome, and so it is unsafe to conclude that the Christians there mentioned were those who now met St Paul and cheered him on his way.

as far as Appii forum] [*R. V.* the Market of Appius] The name 'Forum' seems to have been given by the Romans to places such as we should now call Borough-towns. The town here mentioned was situated on the Appian Way, the great road from Rome to Brundusium. Both road and town owed their name to the famous Appius Claudius, the Roman Censor, and this town is mentioned by Horace as crowded with sailors, and abounding in tavernkeepers of bad character (*Sat.* I. 5. 4). It was distant rather more than forty miles from Rome, and as the Appian Way was only one of two ways by which travellers could go from Appii Forum to the Imperial City, it was natural that the deputation from Rome should halt here and wait for the Apostle's arrival.

The three taverns] The name "*Tabernæ*" had in Latin a much wider signification than the English "Taverns" and was applied to any shop whatever, not as the English word to one where refreshments are sold. The site of this place has not been identified, but it is said to have been about ten miles nearer to Rome than Appii Forum; and the body of Christians who came as far as this had perhaps set out from Rome later than their brethren. The whole distance from Puteoli to

16 thanked God, and took courage. And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

Rome was about 140 miles. "Tres Tabernæ" is placed 33 miles from Rome.

he thanked God, and took courage] When thinking and writing about his coming to Rome, Paul had never thought that his first visit to it would be as a prisoner. He had hoped (Rom. i. 11—12) to come as the bearer of some spiritual blessing, and to be comforted himself by the faith of the Roman brethren. How different was the event from what he had pictured. But yet here were some of the brethren, and their faith and love were made manifest by their journey to meet the Apostle, and no doubt they brought with them the salutations of all the Church. This was somewhat to be thankful for. The prisoner would not be without sympathy, and the spiritual gift might be imparted even though Paul was no longer free. The cause of Christ was advancing; and cheered by the evidence of this the Apostle's heart revived.

16. *And when we came to Rome*] There was much that might have been said of this land journey from Puteoli to Rome, and the writer of the Acts was one of the fellow-travellers. But it is foreign to his purpose to dwell on anything which does not concern the spread of the Gospel according to the command of Jesus (Acts i. 8), and so he leaves all the glorious sights and scenery unmentioned, and tells us no word of the many monuments which stood along the Appian Way, only noticing, what his history required, the two little bands, that represented Christ's cause and the work of the Gospel, in the great city to which they were approaching.

the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but] For these words there is no text in the oldest Greek MSS. which we possess. But the words are not of the same character as many of the sentences which seem introduced into the text of the Acts by later hands. They are entirely independent of anything either in the Acts or the Epistles of St Paul, and it is not easy to understand why they should have been added to the original text. There is moreover such similarity between the ending of the first and last words in the clause, that the eye of an early scribe may have passed over from the one to the other, and thus omitted the clause, and in this way may have originated the text of the MSS. which leave the passage out.

The "Captain of the Guard" here alluded to was probably the "præfectus prætorio," one of whose duties was to take charge of those persons from the provinces whose causes were to be brought before the Emperor.

Paul was suffered to dwell [*R. V.* abide] *by himself*] This lenity was probably due to the commendation of the centurion Julius, who cannot but have found that he had charge of no ordinary prisoner in St Paul,

17—28. *St Paul's interview with the Jews in Rome.*

And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called 17
the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come
together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though I
have committed nothing against the people, or customs of
our fathers, *yet* was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into
the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined 18

and having been saved and aided by the Apostle's advice would naturally wish to do something in return.

with a soldier that kept [*R. V.* guarded] *him*] The custom was that the prisoner should be chained by one hand to the soldier while he was on guard. And to this chain the Apostle often makes allusion in the Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon) written during this imprisonment. See also below, verse 20. The frequent change of the person who guarded him would give the Apostle an opportunity of spreading the knowledge of his cause, and the message of the Gospel, very widely among the Prætorian guards who had him in charge, and many things would have been heard by them from the soldiers who had sailed with St Paul, which would make them ready to attend to the narrative of their prisoner.

17—28. ST PAUL'S INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWS IN ROME.

17. *after three days*] At first the Apostle would naturally desire to learn all he could of the Christian congregations at Rome from those who had been the first to welcome him on his approach to that city. But for this, three days sufficed. Then he set about explaining his position to those of his fellow-countrymen, not Christians, who were of most importance in Rome. For to them would most probably be forwarded an account of the charges to be laid against the Apostle, and of the evidence by which they were to be supported.

Paul called the chief of the Jews together] Keeping still to the rule to offer the Gospel first to the Jews, even here in Rome, where he had good reason to think that his message would not be received. The decree by which in the reign of Claudius all the Jews had been banished from Rome (xviii. 2) was evidently no longer in force. For clearly there was an important body of them resident in the city.

Men and brethren] See note on i. 16.

though I have committed [*R.V.* had done] *nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers*] For everywhere had he shewn himself desirous that his own people should hear the message of the Gospel first, and for Jews he had never forbidden circumcision, only insisting that Gentile converts should not be forced to submit to the Jewish law before they were received into the Christian Church.

delivered prisoner...into the hands of the Romans] He describes the result, rather than the steps by which it was brought about. The chief captain had rescued him from the violence of the Jewish mob, and he

me, would have let *me* go, because there was no cause of
19 death in me. But when the Jews spake against *it*, I was
constrained to appeal unto Cesar; not that I had ought to
20 accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I
called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you:* because
that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.
21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of
Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that

had never since been out of the care of the Roman authorities. Yet but for the Jews he never would have been a Roman prisoner, and when the Sadducees in Jerusalem found that he was not to be given up to them, they made themselves his accusers before Felix and Festus.

18. *would have let me go*] [*R. V.* "desired to set me at liberty"] Alluding most probably to Agrippa's remark (xxvi. 32) and the statement of Festus (xxv. 25). It seems probable that Felix would have found means to set Paul free had the requisite bribe been offered to him (xxiv. 26). All were convinced of his innocence.

19. *not that I had ought to accuse my nation of*] St Paul shews himself the patriotic Jew. He knew how many things his fellow-countrymen had suffered at the hands of the Roman power, and he did not wish in any way to bring on them any more trouble. He therefore explains that he had taken the course of appealing to Cæsar only because he saw no other means of obtaining his release. If that were secured he wished to lay no charge at the door of his accusers or their brethren in Rome.

20. *For this cause therefore have I called for you to see you, and to speak with you*] [*R. V.* "did I intreat you to see and to speak with *me*"] As the marginal note in the *R. V.* shews, the A. V. may be a correct rendering of the Greek, and it is more probable that Paul would say that *he* wished to speak to the Jews than that he wished *them* to come and speak with *him*.

because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain] The hope of Israel is the general expectation of Messiah. In Jesus Paul believed that the expected Saviour had appeared, and for preaching this he had been attacked and made a prisoner. He held the same faith as all the Jews, only going in this matter farther than they in that he believed the ancient promise was now fulfilled. We can see from the reply of the Jews that they understood his position exactly.

21. *letters out of* [*R. V.* from] *Judea concerning thee*] This may easily be understood. For no ship starting later than that in which St Paul sailed was likely to have arrived in Rome before he reached that city, and the Jews who conducted the accusation would take a little time for drawing up all the details which they desired to lay before the court of appeal, so that their despatch would be sent later than the time of Paul's sailing. For before it was determined that he should be sent to Rome they would see no necessity for informing the Jews there concerning his case.

came shewed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to 22
hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect,
we know that every where it is spoken against. And when 23
they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into
his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the

neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee] [*R.V.* "nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak &c."] The English of the A. V. makes the words refer to any who might have come to Rome from Judæa at any time. And it is conceivable that during the time between Paul's first arrest and his arrival in Rome many opportunities might have arisen for news about the prisoner to have been sent to Rome. But in the original it appears as if only the present time were in the minds of the speakers, and what they want to say is represented by the *R.V.* "Nobody has come in connection with this trial and appeal to tell us any evil about thee." They seem not to have been at all anxious to move in the matter. At whatever time the edict of Claudius was withdrawn it could only be within the last few years (ten at the most) that the Jewish population had been again permitted to come to Rome. They were probably loath therefore to call public attention again to their nation by appearing before the court of appeal in a cause connected with their religion.

22. *But we desire to hear of thee*] He was a Jew, one of their own nation, and was likely to be able to put his belief before them in its true light. They professed to be open to reason, but this may have been only because they knew not what else to do.

concerning this sect] It is clear from this expression that they had learnt from St Paul's speech, though St Luke does not record the words, that he was an adherent of Jesus of Nazareth, and held that in Him "the hope of Israel" had been fulfilled.

we know] [*R. V.* "it is known to us"]. The change has the merit of being very literal. Other merit it would be hard to find in it.

every where it is spoken against] They were doubtless aware of many of the attacks which had been made by their countrymen on the Christians both in the cities of Asia and Europe, and would have heard them spoken of as the men who were turning the world upside down. The result of the conference was that a day was fixed, on which the Apostle should set forth to them his opinions, so that, as they had no other means for deciding on their course of action, they might discover for themselves what would be the best course to take.

23. *many*] The original is the comparative degree, and implies that the first visitors had been only a small deputation, but that on the set day they and their fellows appeared "in greater numbers."

into his lodging] From this it would seem that for the first portion of the time that Paul was in Rome, he was allowed to accept the hospitality of the Christian body, and though chained to his guard, yet to be resident in a house which his friends had provided for him, and where he was, as far as he could be under the circumstances, treated as their guest.

kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the *things* which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their*

to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God] [*R. V.* "expounded *the matter*, testifying the, &c."] i.e. bearing witness that the Messianic hope, which the Jews all spake of as the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of heaven, had now been revealed.

from morning till evening] It is clear from what follows that as in Jerusalem so here, there were some to whom the Apostle's words were not all unwelcome. This accounts for their staying to hear him the whole day through.

24. *some believed not*] [*R. V.* disbelieved]. No doubt both the Sadducees and the Pharisees had their representatives here as elsewhere among the Jewish population.

25. *agreed not among themselves*] This may have been the real cause of their inaction in the matter of the Apostle's trial. He would not have been without a party of supporters among their own body.

unto our [*R. V.* your] *fathers*] The change of pronoun has the support of the oldest MSS., and is more in accord with the spirit in which St Paul is speaking. He would wish to distinguish these obstinate Jews from himself and others who received the words of the Old Testament as fulfilled in Jesus.

26. *saying*, &c.] The passage which the Apostle quotes is from Isaiah vi. 9, and had already been quoted by our Lord himself against the Jews (Matt. xiii. 14; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; see also John xii. 40) when He was explaining why all His teaching was given in parables. He spake in this wise first because had He said openly all that He wished to teach He would have had far less chance of acceptance than when His message was veiled under a parable; and next He so spake that those only who cared to manifest a desire to know the deeper meaning of His words might be able to do so. His words were for those who had ears to hear. But most of those to whom He spake had not.

Hearing [*R. V.* "By hearing"] i.e. with the outward organs ye shall catch what is said, but since ye have no heart for the message, ye shall not understand.

eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the 28
salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it. And when he had said these *words*, the Jews 29
departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, 30

27. *and should be converted*] [*R. V.* "and should turn again"] The new rendering is to be preferred on account of the restricted meaning which in modern speech has become attached to the word "convert." In the older language it signified "to turn round and go back again."

28. *the* [*R. V.* this] *salvation of God*] The oldest MSS. add "this," and it has been almost surely omitted in later MSS. by the carelessness of the scribes. The Apostle would be anxious to emphasize that the doctrine which he was preaching to them and which they were rejecting, that *this*, was God's very message of salvation.

and that they will hear it] This is certainly a wrong sense of the original. The Apostle does not wish to convey, as the English Version does, a taunt to the Jews that they come behind the Gentiles. What he wants to express is, that now the message has been given according to Christ's command to the Jews everywhere, for Rome may be regarded as the centre of the then known world, and now the time has come when the Gentiles should in their turn be privileged to have everywhere the offers of the Gospel. Therefore read (with *R. V.*) "they will also hear" (i.e. as well as you), though looked upon by strict Jews as beyond the pale of salvation.

29. *And when*, &c.] This verse is omitted in the oldest MSS. and in *R. V.*

30. *And Paul*] The proper name is omitted in the oldest MSS., and this omission supports the rejection of verse 29. It is only the insertion of that verse which rendered the word "Paul" here needful to the sense.

two whole years] Of these years we have no history, except such as we can gather from the four Epistles which were written from Rome during the time (see above on verse 16). We know that from first to last the chain galled both his body and mind (Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1; Phil. i. 13, 16; Col. iv. 18; Philem. verses 1, 9, 10), and that his case was at times an object of much anxiety (Phil. ii. 23, 24). We also learn from the same letters that beside Luke and Aristarchus (Acts xxvii. 27), he had also the fellowship, for some time at least, of Tychicus, who (Eph. vi. 21) was the bearer of his letter to Ephesus; of Timothy, whom (Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 1; Philem. 1) he joins with himself in the greeting to the Churches of Philippi and Colossæ and also in that to Philemon. In the former of these Churches Timothy had been a fellow-labourer with the Apostle. Epaphroditus came with the Philippian contributions to the need of the imprisoned Apostle (Phil. iv. 18). Onesimus found out St Paul when in flight from his master he made his way to Rome

31 and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those *things* which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

(Col. iv. 9; Philem. 10) Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, was also there, and another Jewish convert, Jesus, called Justus, of whom we only know that the Apostle considered him worthy to be called a fellow-worker unto the kingdom of God (Col. iii. 12). Epaphras, from the churches in Laodicea and Hierapolis, had come to visit Paul, and to bring him the greetings doubtless of the Christians there, and carry back some words of earnest counsel and advice from the Roman prisoner (Col. iii. 12). Last of all Demas was there, soon after to be mentioned as having forsaken the good way through love of this present world (Col. iii. 14; 2 Tim. iv. 10). More than this and the few words in this verse we do not know of this first imprisonment.

in his own hired house] [*R. V.* dwelling] The means for such hiring were provided by the liberality of the Philippians and others, for the Apostle could no longer with his own hands minister even to his own wants.

all that came [*R. V.* went] *in unto him*] For the fulness of Gospel freedom had now been reached, and the word of God and the kingdom of God were open to all who sought unto them.

with all confidence, no man forbidding him] The word rendered "confidence" [*R. V.* "boldness"] implies that "freedom of speech" which was looked upon by the Athenians as the great mark of their liberty. For Englishmen there must arise the thought that perhaps from some of those Roman soldiers who heard Paul in his prison the message of the Gospel came first to our island.

The historian had now reached the end of his work, and does not even tell the manner of the Apostle's release, though as he mentions the duration of the imprisonment, he must have known how he came to be liberated. But that concerned not the purpose of his record, and so he has no word more. "*Victoria Verbi Dei. Paulus Romæ. Apex Evangelii. Actorum Finis*" (Bengel).

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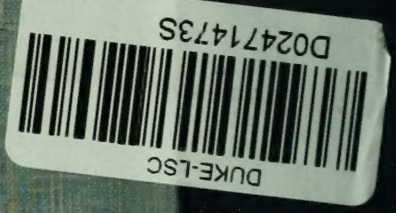
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